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FRONTISPIECE



ÆSOP'S TRIAL,

*So the Court was convened & each witness subpoena'd
 The judge and the jury attendant,
 And there all alone, mounted up on a stone,
 Stood poor Æsop, the hapless defendant.*

London, Published by Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, Jan^y 1821.

N. Howland

ÆSOP IN RHYME,

WITH

SOME ORIGINALS.

BY

JEFFERYS TAYLOR,

AUTHOR OF HARRY'S HOLIDAY.

I shall not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau
If *animals* converse or no ;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold discourse, at least, in fable.

COWPER'S POEMS.

WITH AN ENGRAVING TO EACH FABLE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY,
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1820.

C. Baldwin, Printer,
New Bridge-street, London.

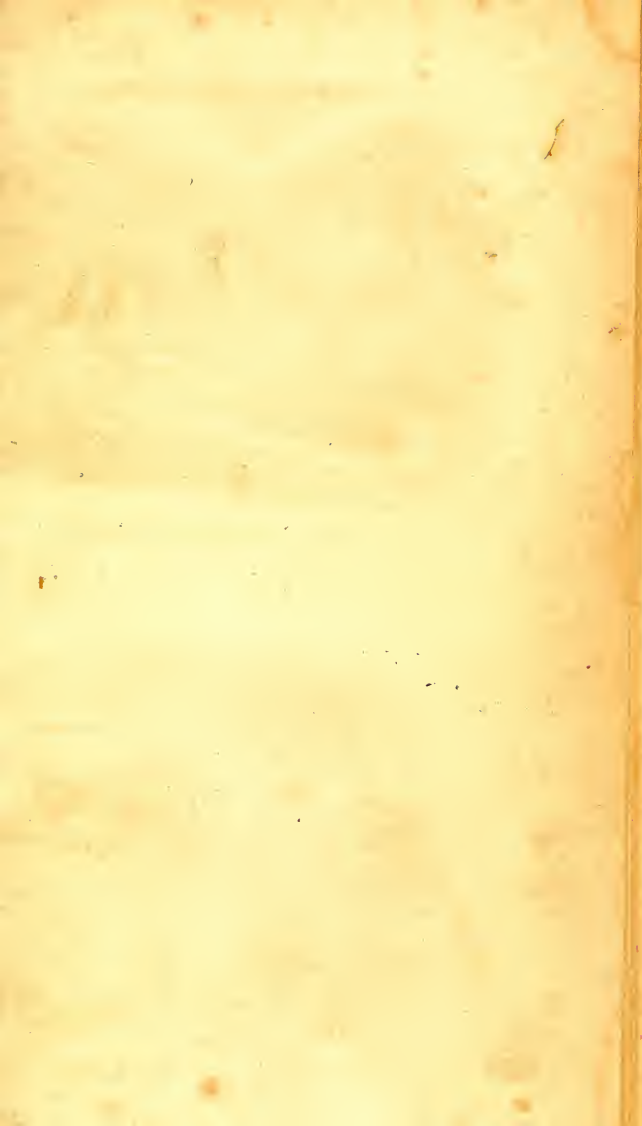
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The Oak & the Reed.



The Fox & the Lion.

ÆSOP IN RHYME,

&c. &c.

FABLE I.

THE OAK AND THE REED.

THE thunder roar'd, the wind was high,
And vivid lightning fill'd the sky;
When an old oak, whose aged form
Ere now had witness'd many a storm,
Had borne the brunt, and still withstood
The wind, the lightning, and the flood;
Was torn up from his roots at last,
By one tremendous, wintry blast;
Then headlong to the stream descended;
His ancient pride and glory ended.

The ample waters soon convey'd
The oak-tree from his well-known shade;
Then unknown, naked hills were seen,
With rude and dreary wilds between,
And by the river's oozy edge,
Grew weakly reeds and languid sedge.
“Strange!” thought the oak, (permit the fable,)
“That plants so slender should be able

Thus to survive the stormy day,
Which made my stubborn limbs give way."

A reed just bending with the storm,
Then to the oak inclin'd its form ;
And thus it whisper'd,—“ Aged friend,
I do not break because I bend ;
I find it best while troubles last,
To bow beneath them till they're past.”

Thus spoke the trembling reed, and ceased ;
For now the windy storm increased ;
Then to the earth it bow'd its head,
Proving the truth of what it said.
Meanwhile the oak, with quicken'd sail,
Was hurried onward by the gale ;
And scarce had time allow'd to say
“ You're right,” ere he was borne away.

Of moral here there's little need,
Since that was furnish'd by the reed.

FABLE II.

THE FOX AND THE LION.

WHEN the fox and the lion first happen'd to meet,
 Poor Reynard fell down at his majesty's feet,
 So great was the terror inspired ;
 But the next time he met him, not quite so afraid,
 When the lion approach'd an obeisance he made,
 And after his health he inquired.

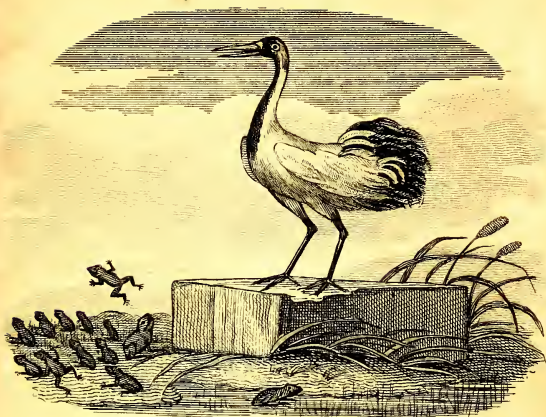
But the third time he met him, " Old crony," said he,
 " Pray whither so fast? I must say, to be free,
 That you're grown somewhat cool and unkind."
 The dignified lion deign'd not a reply ;
 But taking the fox to a river hard by,
 Cool'd *him*, both in body and mind.

Thought the fox, whilst emerging in woe-begone state,
 " This comes of one's making too free with the great."

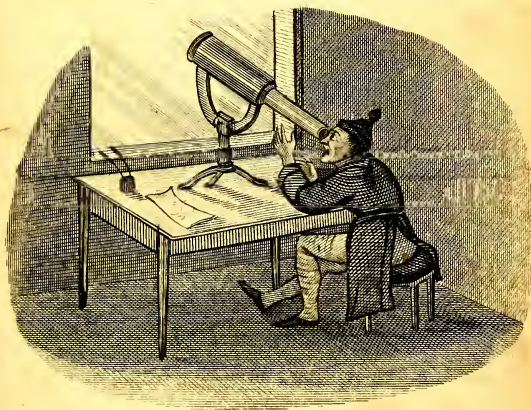
FABLE III.

THE FROGS.

SOME frogs within a bog or ditch,
 I really cannot tell you which ;
 Yet I prefer to say a *bog*,
 For that you know best rhymes to *frog* :
 These frogs, as Esop's muse doth sing,
 Requested they might have a king.
 So *Jupiter*, in merry mood,
 Straight threw them down a log of wood :
 But who can say how much it splash'd,
 Or who was frighten'd, who was mash'd ?
 Surprised that such should be the case,
 Nor liking much this act of grace,
 They kept aloof a day or two,
 For fear of what he next might do.
 " But see, how still he lies," said they,
 " Let's go and hear what he will say ;"
 So they approach'd the royal log,
 And there was one courageous frog,
 Who leap'd upon him, to inquire,
 What was his majesty's desire ;
 But he of course no answer made ;
 So they, concluding he was dead,
 Petition'd Jupiter again,
 Who quickly sent them down a crane.



The Discontented Frogs.



The Solar Phenomenon.

This gracious prince to all the nation
 Then issued forth a proclamation,
 In which the greatest, and the least,
 Were all invited to a feast.
 And so, on the appointed day
 Legions of frogs stopp'd up the way.

“ Now,” said the king, “ upon this log
 Is spread our feast ; and any frog
 Who to jump on may not be able,
 I'll raise him gently to the table.”

Enough was said, for every guest
 Around the monarch's person prest.
 The king then made a gracious bend,
 To help his subjects to ascend ;
 But so it was, as Esop wrote,
 He let them fall straight down his throat ;
 While those below thought all was right,
 Although their friends were out of sight ;
 Till one, who something wrong suspected,
 Leap'd up, and so the fraud detected.
 Who can describe his feelings then ?
 My tongue cannot, nor can my pen :
 Scarce was he up, ere he was down,
 And made the whole transaction known.
 Enough was said, for every frog,
 Ere he had ceased, forsook the bog ;
 Croaking and groaning as they went,
 For their *old* form of government.

This fable Phædrus did relate,
 Referring to affairs of state :
 But leaving *politics* alone
 Till we're a little older grown,
 'Twill be a safer way for us,
 To take the author's meaning thus,—
 That folks well off should be content,
 Nor make a change they may repent.

FABLE IV.

THE SOLAR PHENOMENON.

AN astronomer gazing, as oft he had done,
 Through a very long telescope aim'd at the sun,
 Descried, on a sudden, a spot on his face,
 So large as to darken one third of his rays !
 “ Oh ! Newton, Oh ! Halley, were ye but alive,
 What name to this monster, I ask, would ye give ?
 Like no other spot on his disc does it seem ;
 As *maculæ*, *faculæ*, neither of them.
 But what do I see ? the phenomenon moves,
 And there are its legs too, which certainly proves
 That it must be an animal :—awful indeed !
 For its length half a million of miles must exceed :
 If so, then the question must needs be decided,
 Which has for so long all the learned divided ;
 For now 'tis as plain as the nose on my face,
 That the sun is in truth an inhabited place !—

“ Oh, all ye philosophers, moralists, sages,
 Who have puzzled your brains on this subject for ages ;
 Old Thales, Copernicus, Newton, Descartes,
 Draw near, if ye can, and the truth I'll impart.”

He ceased : but he scarcely an ending had made,
 When the shades of those worthies his summons obey'd ;
 And, in low hollow voices, demanded in haste,
 For what reason he'd call'd them, and broken their rest.

“ Oh, indeed ! are ye come ? ” said our hero, surprised,

“ Why I did not suppose, as ye all had demised,
 What I said could have reach'd you ; but, as it is so,
 Forthwith I'll proceed the huge monster to show.”
 So saying, to each he the telescope handed,
 And quickly of each his opinion demanded.

Said Newton, “ That there is some creature I own ;
 But I do not believe it exists in the sun : ”

“ Nor I,” said Copernicus, Thales, and all ;

“ In fact we believe 'tis no wonder at all ! ”

“ Then pray,” said our hero, “ explain what you see,
 And say what you take this appearance to be.”

Said Newton, “ Unscrew the last lens from your
 glass ; ”

The astronomer quickly obey'd, and, alas !

For his fame and his theory—what should he descry,
When he open'd the end of his tube,—but *a fly!*

Examine them well, ere you speak of new wonders:
'Twill save you from many ridiculous blunders.

FABLE V.

THE COMPLIANT FARMER.

AN honest farmer and his son
Were driving once an ass to town;
But, wishing not to tire the brute,
They would not ride, but walk'd on foot.

“ Well,” said a man, whom soon they met,
“ I ne’er beheld such nonsense yet!
Why should ye walk? why don’t ye ride?
Pray what’s a donkey for beside?”

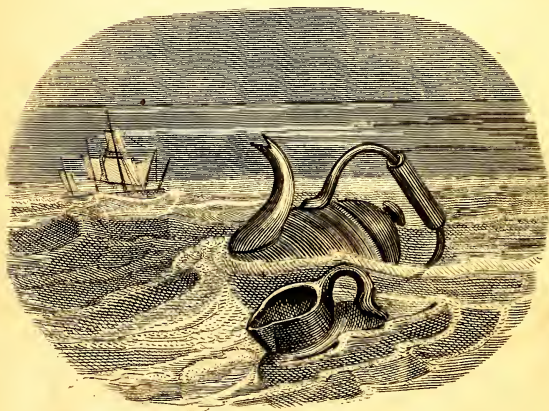
“ Right,” said the farmer; “ Son, arise,
And take our worthy friend’s advice.”
The duteous son obey’d with haste,
And soon bestrode th’ unwilling beast.

Scarce had he mounted, when, behold!
Two women next began to scold.





The Compliant Farmer.



The two Vessels.

“ You lazy boy !” at once they cried,
 “ Why don’t you let your father ride ?”

“ True,” said the father ; “ Son, get down :
 I’ll ride, and you shall walk to town.”
 The son dismounted honest Ned,
 And let his father ride instead.

Once more they sped them on their way,
 And met a party ; “ Come,” said they,
 “ Your legs are longer than your son’s ;
 Suppose you *let him* ride for once.”

“ Good,” said the father ; “ Son, you see
 There’s room enough for you and me ;
 Get up behind.”—Once more the son
 Bestrode the beast, and journey’d on.

Again they sped ; again they met
 A party not contented yet :
 Said they, “ Have pity on your beast,
 And one of you get down at least.”

But our good farmer thought, at last,
 He e’en would profit by the past ;
 Nor change again, unless, indeed,
 In one opinion all agreed.

Although opinions vary so,
 'Tis hard the right from wrong to know,
 (And never would the labour cease,
 Of studying every man's caprice ;)
 Yet *some* there are in which we see
 The wise and good *do* all agree :
 Let their opinions be your own,
 And let what they advise be done.

FABLE VI.

THE TWO VESSELS.

I'LL tell you a tale ;—two vessels set sail,
 Without either captain or crew !
 Your wonder to settle, they were a brass kettle,
 An earthenware porringer too.

“ O dear ! ” said the latter : — “ Friend, what is the matter ? ”

The kettle demanded, at last.

Said the pitcher, “ I think I shall certainly sink,
 I am filling with water so fast.”

“ Oh ! be not afraid, I will lend you my aid ;

Hook on to my spout,” said the kettle.

Said the pitcher, “ O dear, it is you that I fear,
 Since if we come nigh, of the blow *I* must die ;
 For I'm *earthen*, but you are of *metal*.”

As weak folks oft suffer by strong ones, I say
That the weaker had better keep out of their way.

FABLE VII.

THE BEAR AND THE HERMIT:

ONCE a bear had a thorn in his foot, as they term it,
Which it seems was extracted from thence by a hermit :
So the beast felt so grateful, and pleased with the der-
vise,
That he offer'd to enter quite into his service.

So the hermit consented, at length, to the plan.
“ Now then,” thought the bear, “ I must do what I
can
To make myself useful ; and glad I shall be
If a service in turn shall be render'd by me.”

Not long after this, as the hermit was sleeping,
And the bear was the watch with great vigilance keep-
ing ;
On the nose of the former alighted a fly ;
“ O now,” thought the bear, “ my best skill I must
try.”

So he lifted his paw, and completed the process,
But crush'd with the fly his poor patron's proboscis !

Up started the hermit—"Base villain," said he,
 "Is this the reward for my goodness to thee?"

The bear felt confounded, as any one would,
 But explain'd the transaction as well as he could.
 "Well! be sure," said the hermit, "when next you
 kill flies,
 If on me they alight, just to ask my advice;
 For I'd rather have *fifty* of them on my nose,
 Than one of your friendly but terrible blows."

Let us always take heed, when we render a service,
 That we serve not our friend as the bear did the der-
 vise :
 Some ills had much better, we know, be endured,
 Than the pain, or the danger, of having them cured.

FABLE VIII.

THE CLOWN PRAYING TO HERCULES.

An ancient Roman, you must know,
 (I think his name was *Cicero*,)
 Wishing to make his garden smarter,
 Bespoke some gravel of a carter;
 But that had many miles to come,
 To reach his seat at *Tusculum*;

And then, beside all this, the way
 Was quite knee-deep in miry clay ;
 The horse was lame, the cart was crazy ;
 And, worse than all, the man was lazy.
 If so, you'll say, I am afraid
 That Tully's job will be delay'd.
 Exactly so ;—the cart at length
 Was fix'd beyond the horse's strength :
 In vain the driver groan'd and grumbled,
 Down in the mud all fours he tumbled,
 And there for near an hour he lay ;
 Thought he, " To Hercules I'll pray,
 And this, I think, will do to say :

" ' O thou, who wrench'd the lion's jaws,
 Regardless of his teeth and claws ;
 Who drown'd the *Hydra* (if I'm right,)
 And *Cerberus* didst drag to light ;
 Who flung the boar, and toss'd the bull
 Over thy shoulders, with a pull ;
 Captured the oxen ; *Geryon* slew,
 And *Diomedes* vanquish'd too ;
 Who caught the stag that ran so fast,
 And shot those birds of prey at last ;
 Who conquer'd those great *amazons*,
 And all the stables cleansed at once
 (Two thousand of them) ; and, I'm told,
 Procured the apples made of gold.
 O Hercules ! so strong thou art,
 Sure thou canst move this horse and cart.' "

Scarce had he ceased, when rolling thunder
 Surprised this man with fear and wonder ;
 Then straight before his eyes he sees
 No less a form than Hercules,
 Who soon began in words like these :

“ You impious, idle, lazy fellow !
 How long will you lie there and bellow ?
 Disturbing my immortal neighbours
 With that long rig-me-roll of labours !
 Think you, I'll help you with your load,
 While you lie sprawling on the road ?
 Apply your shoulders to the wheel,
 Nor idly thus before me kneel ;
 Then, should the task too mighty prove,
 I may assist you with a shove ;
 But those who indolent remain,
 May roar for help, but roar in vain.”

This is the moral of the fable,
 To help yourself if you are able.

FABLE IX.

THE LION AND THE ASS.

IN the days of old Esop, it once came to pass
That a lion saw fit to make friends with an ass ;
“ For,” said he, “ I well know, by myself, he can bray
In such style as to strike all the beasts with dismay.”

“ Now you take the rear, I’ll proceed to the van,”
Said the lion, “ then make the worst noise that you can ;
They’ll be seized with a panic, I have not a doubt,
Which will end in their total dispersion and route.”

So the ass bray’d a tune which he thought would
succeed,
When the cattle made off with incredible speed ;
Then the lion fell on them and made them his prey :
“ Only think,” said the donkey, “ how well I can bray.”

“ Well,” said he to the lion, “ pray how did it do ?”
“ Indeed,” said that beast, “ Sir, you frighten’d me too ;
And, had I not known it before, I protest,
I, myself, should have run with all speed, like the rest.”

Some folks think their failings for merits will pass ;
Though none will think so, I admit, but an ass.

FABLE X.

THE DOG INVITED TO DINNER.

A GENTLEMAN, (a friend of mine,)
 Invited sundry folks to dine ;
 I cannot tell you who, because
 I was not there ; but some one was,
 Who, when return'd, with ready pen
 Recorded that which happen'd then.

It seems this circumstance occur'd ;—
 The dog, the orders overheard,
 For game and fish, and butcher's meat,
 And much beside,—a royal treat.
 So finding mighty preparations,
 The dog ask'd one of *his* relations ;
 He thought it was, and so do I,
 A lucky opportunity.

This dog arrived, was usher'd in,
 Where charming things were smelt and seen ;
 The meat while raw so tempting look'd,
 They wish'd it were not to be cook'd ;
 Though then they might have thought it nice,
 But for the pepper and the spice :
 Yet as it might be underdone,
 And some have pepper, some have none,

'Twixt venison, mutton, beef, and veal,
They doubted not to make a meal.

But woe befel the luckless cur ;
Whence some disaster, you'll infer.
The cook, you see, who chanced to find him,
Turn'd round, and softly crept behind him ;
Then took a leg in either hand,
All which you clearly understand ;
And bore the inverted, howling beast
Far from the kitchen and the feast ;
Then from the window to the yard
Was thrown the dog, who thought it hard.
'Twas bad enough to break his bones,
By falling headlong on the stones ;
But this, though bad, was not the worst
That yet remains to be rehearsed ;
For all the dogs and cats, he knew,
Press'd round with friendly "*how d'ye do?*"
" Do ! " said our hero, somewhat gruff,
" What do you mean ? I'm well enough."

" We're glad to hear it, sir," said they,
" How did you like your dinner, pray ? "

" Dinner ! " said he,—" I only wish
All you could taste that charming dish ;
In truth so much I ate and drank,
I must acknowledge, to be frank,

I was so sadly overcome,
I scarce know how I left the room."

Thus disappointment and confusion
Reward an impudent intrusion.

FABLE XI.

THE EAGLE AND THE CROW.

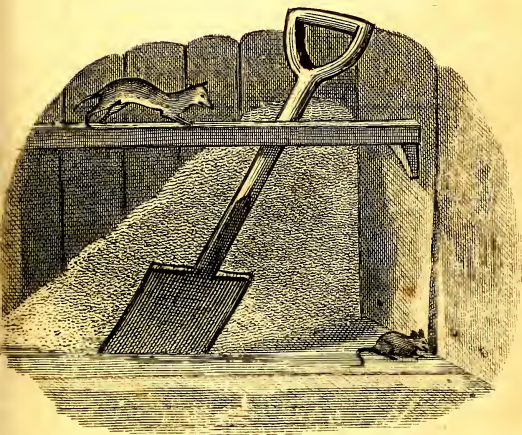
AN eagle descending one day from the skies,
Seized a lamb in his talons, and made him his prize:
Then spreading his pinions abroad to the gale,
Bore his prey through the air with a dignified sail.

"That was very well done," thought a crow, "I
confess;
Yet I can perform it still better, I guess:"
So saying, *she* dropp'd on the back of a lamb,
But "alas!" thought the crow, "what a blockhead
I am!"

For her feet were entangled so fast in the fleece,
That she neither could rise nor obtain her release;
So instead of her taking the *lamb*, you must know,
The lamb, with great ease, ran away with the *crow*.



The Eagle & the Crow.



The Mouse & the Weasel.



When little folks try with the great to compare,
They soon show their neighbours *how* little they are.

FABLE XII.

THE MOUSE AND THE WEASEL.

OF a mouse I have read, who so poorly was fed,
That her person quite dwindled away;
Until being so thin, through a crack she squeezed in
To some corn, where she feasted all day.

When no more she could eat, she essay'd to retreat,
But how was she shock'd to discern
That her bulk had increas'd, by the means of her feast,
To a size that forbad her return!

So she scrambled about; but she could not get out;
Said a weazel, "Your hurry I blame;
This advice I would tender:—first starve yourself
slender,
And then you may go as you came."

This mouse, it is frankly confess'd, might be needy,
But that's no excuse for her being so greedy:
If less she had eaten, no doubt, through the crack
Which she enter'd so freely, she might have got back.

FABLE XIII.

THE GRAPES ARE SOUR.

A MONKEY some charming ripe grapes once espied,
 Which how to obtain, was the query ;
 For up to a trellis, so high they were tied,
 That he jump'd till he made himself weary.

So finding, at last, they were out of his power,
 Said he, " Let them have them who will :
 I see that they're green, and don't doubt that they're
 sour,
 And fruit that's unripe makes me ill."

Those will ne'er be believed by the world, it is plain,
 Who pretend to *dislike* what they cannot obtain.

FABLE XIV.

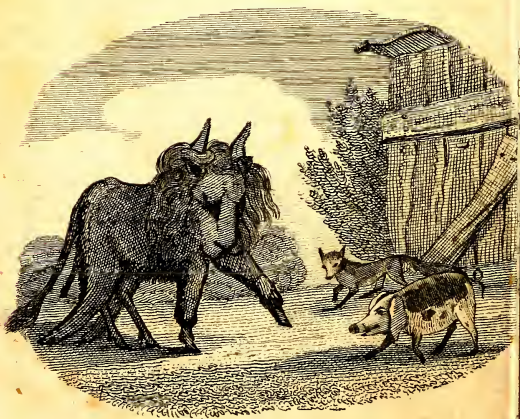
THE ASS IN THE LION'S SKIN.

AN ass, who imagined his virtues neglected,
 And saw that his talents were little respected ;
 Supposing folks judg'd of his worth by his skin,
 Resolv'd the first good one he saw to creep in.





The Monkey & Grapes.



The Ass in the Lion's skin.

Soon after he found the fine coat of a lion ;

“ O ! this,” thought the ass, “ by all means I will try on.”

Which at last he contriv’d to throw over his shoulders ;

“ Now,” said he, “ with what awe shall I strike all beholders !”

Then he went to a pond, to survey himself in it,

And when he had stay’d to adjust it a minute,

Had had the last look, and felt sure it would do,

To his neighbours he hasted, to make his *debut*.

“ Dear ! now,” said the beast, “ how provoking it is,
Not a soul’s to be seen such a fine day as this !”

—I wish, though, it would not hang over one’s eyes ;

I must try to procure one that’s nearer my size.”

Just after he met a stray pig in the road,

So he look’d as terrific and fierce as he could ;

But instead of his showing the smallest dismay,

The pig only grunted, and kept on his way.

He next saw a fox, and, to fright him the more,

He tried, when they met, like a lion to roar :

“ Ah !” said Reynard, “ think not for a *lion* to pass,

While you act like a donkey, and bray like an *ass*.”

Vulgar people well drest will be sure to be known ;

For the moment they *speak*, their vulgarity’s shown.

FABLE XV.

THE MAN WHO HAD TRAVELLED.

A MAN who had travell'd, his story unravell'd,
 And strange were the things he related ;
 Till his hearers began to discredit the man ;
 For they were with his miracles sated.

So he rack'd his invention, to keep their attention,
 And at last he declar'd to them all
 That he leap'd from the dome of St. Peter's at Rome,
 Without being hurt by his fall.

“ For,” said he, “ when at Rhodes, I conform'd to
 their modes,
 And in leaping became so expert,
 That now should they toss us clean o'er the *Colossus*,
 I am certain I should not be hurt !”

This, all were agreed, was surprising indeed,
 Provided the whole were authentic ;
 Then the truth to confirm, he employ'd ev'ry term
 In *Sheridan*, *Johnson*, or *Entick*.

“ But, good sir,” said a friend, “ all our scruples
 must end,
 If you would but just leap from that steeple ;”



The Man who had Travell'd.



The Dog & the Wolf.



ut our hero thought fit, at that hint to retreat
From a pack of incredulous people.

When people assert an achievement expert,
And have *only* assertions to show it;
There is ground to suspect that they are not correct;
The best proof of all is to *do* it.

FABLE XVI.

THE DOG AND THE WOLF.

A WOLF there was, whose scanty fare
Had made his person lean and spare :
A dog there was, so amply fed,
His sides were plump and sleek, 'tis said.
The wolf once met this prosp'rous cur,
And thus began :—" Your servant, sir ;
I'm pleased to see you look so well,
Though how it is I cannot tell ;
I have not broke my fast to-day ;
Nor have I, I'm concern'd to say,
One bone in store or expectation,
And that I call a great vexation."

" Indeed it is," the dog replied ;
" I know no ill so great beside ;

But if you do not like to be
 So poorly fed, come live with me."
 "Agreed," rejoin'd the wolf, "I'll go;
 But pray what work am I to do?"
 "O, guard the house, and do not fail
 To bark at thieves, and wag your tail."

So off they jogg'd, and soon arrived,
 At where the friendly mastiff lived,
 "Well," said the wolf, "I can't deny
 You have a better house than I."
 "Not so," the other then replied,
 "If you with me will hence abide."
 "O!" said the wolf, "how kind you are!
 But what d'ye call *that*, hanging there?
 Is it an iron chain, or what?"
 "Friend," said the dog, "I quite forgot
 To mention that:—sometimes, you see,
 They hook that little chain to *me*;
 But it is only meant to keep
 Us dogs from walking in our sleep,
 And should you wear it, you would find,
 It's nothing that you need to mind."

"I'll take your word," the wolf replied,
 It's truth by me shall ne'er be tried;
 I'll have my liberty again,
 And you your collar and your chain."





The Herdsman.



The Chamelion.

Our neighbours sometimes seem to be
 A vast deal better off than we ;
 Yet seldom 'tis they really are,
 Since *they* have troubles too to bear,
 Which, if the truth were really known,
 Are quite as grievous as our own.

FABLE XVII.

THE HERDSMAN.

A HERDSMAN, who lived at a time and a place
 Which, should you not know, is but little disgrace,
 Discover'd one morning, on counting his stock,
 That a sheep had been stolen that night from the flock.

“ O, I wish I had caught ye, *whoever ye be*,
 I'd have soon let you know, I'd have soon let you see,
 What ye had to expect,” said the herdsman, “ I trow ;
 But I've thought of a scheme that will trouble you now.”

So what did he do, sir, but put up a board,
 Describing the theft, and proposed a reward
 Of a lamb, to the man who would give information
 Concerning the thief, and his true designation.

The project succeeded ; for quickly there came
 Some half dozen neighbours, demanding the lamb ;
 “ But tell me the thief ? ” said the herdsman, “ at least
 “ Come hither,” said they, “ and we’ll show you the
 beast.”

“ The *beast* ! ” said the rustic, who thought he
 should die on

The spot, when he found that the thief was a lion !

“ Ill luck to my hurry ! what now shall I do ?

I promised a lamb to detect you, ’tis true ;

But now I’d consent *all* my substance to pay,

If I could but with safety get out of your way.”

Silly people ask things that would ruin, if sent ;
 They demand them in haste, and at leisure repent.



FABLE XVIII.

THE CHAMELEON.

Two friends, B and A, were disputing, one day,
 On a creature they’d both of them seen ;
 But who would suppose the debate that arose
 Was whether ’twas scarlet or green.

Said B, "If you're right, I will own black is white,
Or that two, with two added, make eight ;"

"And so will I too," replied A, "when you show
That that creature is green, as you state."

"Sir, it was, I maintain ; I affirm it again ;
Am I not to believe my own eyes ?"

"It was not," replied A, "it was scarlet, I say,
Which none but a madman denies."

Then said C, "My good fellow, you'll find it is yellow ;
You surely have never been near it :"

"That cannot be true, for I'm certain 'twas blue,"
Said another who happen'd to hear it.

"O !" said D, "it's absurd ! if you'll credit my word,
The creature was brown as a berry :"

"Not brown, sir," said Jack, "when I saw it, 'twas
black ;"

Then the neighbours began to be merry.

"Come," said E, "hold your tongue, you are all of
you wrong,

Or, at least, you are none of you right :"

Then a box he display'd, where the creature was laid,
When this marvellous lizard was white !

“ Good people,” said I, “ a chameleon’s dye,
 He can change any colour to suit ;
 Now if this had been known, all must candidly own,
 You would not have commenced the dispute.”

This great altercation show’d small information,
 As such disputes constantly do ;
 For ignorant minds, one most commonly finds,
 Are excessively positive too.

FABLE XIX.

THE BOYS AND THE FROGS.

SOME boys, beside a pond or lake,
 Were playing once at *duck and drake* ;
 When, doubtless, to their hearts content,
 Vollies of stones were quickly sent.

But there were some (there will be such)
 Who did not seem amused so much ;
 These were the frogs, to whom the game,
 In point of sport, was not the same.

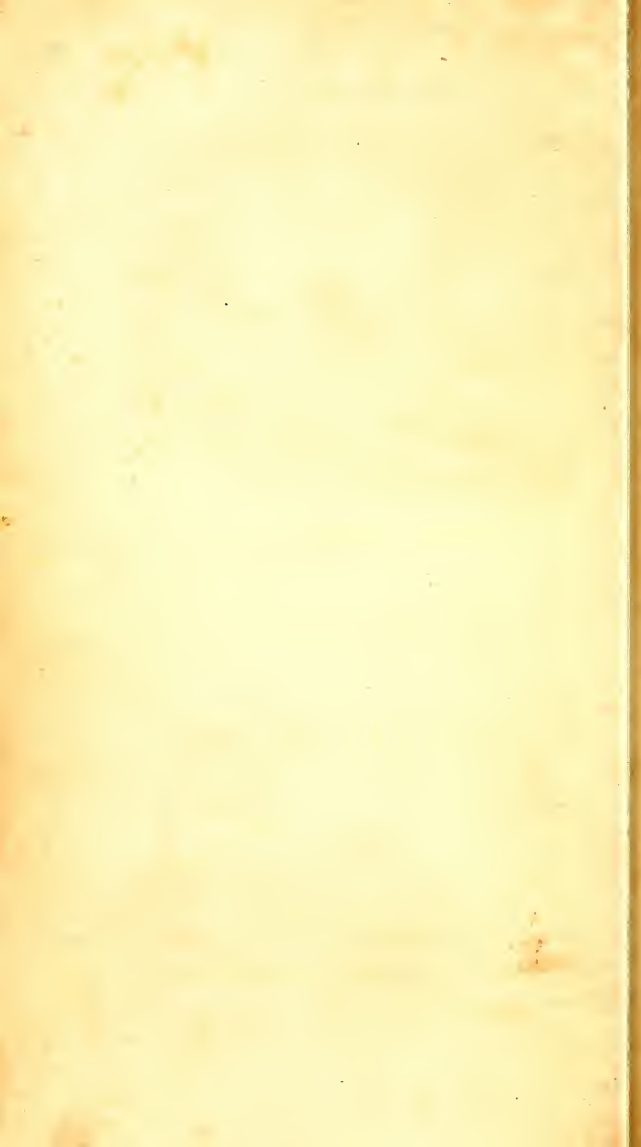
For scarce a stone arrived, ’tis said,
 But gave some frog a broken head ;



The Boys & the Frogs.



The Horse & the Ass.



And scores, in less than half an hour,
Perish'd beneath the dreadful shower.

At last, said one, " Young folks, I say,
Do fling your stones another way ;
Tho' *sport* to *you*, to throw them thus,
Remember, pray, 'tis *death* to us !"

From hence this moral may be learn'd ;—
Let play *be play* to *all concern'd*.

FABLE XX.

THE HORSE AND THE ASS.

A HORSE, and a donkey, once met on the road :
" Dear me !" said the former, " you've got a great load ;
I'm really concern'd at your case from my heart."
" Why then," thought the ass, " don't you carry a
part ?"

At last, said the donkey, " Come, neighbour, I say,
Won't you lend me a hand with my burden to-day ?
I'll carry the panniers, if you'll take the sack ;
If you'll stop, I can hitch it just on to your back."

“Not so,” said the horse, “for should that come
to pass,
Your owner, I’m certain, would think *me* an ass;
And sooner I’d bear any load he could pile,
Than a name so contemptible, vulgar, and vile.”

The ass gave a look, but she nothing replied;
For she fell to the earth with her burden, and died;
So the man coming up when he saw the ass fall,
Made the horse carry donkey, sack, panniers, and all.

We had best with good-will help our neighbours in
trouble,
Nor be forced to comply when the labour is double.

FABLE XXI.

MERCURY AND THE SCULPTOR.

WE’VE often made the beasts and birds
To speak their minds, and utter words;
So sure ’twill make but little odds
To introduce the heathen gods;
And if the fable’s understood,
I think you’ll say the moral’s good;
But should you not approve the same,
Esop, not I, must bear the blame.





Mercury & the Sculptor.



The Bull & the Knave.

Mercury, wishing much to know
 How he was liked by men below,
 Disguised himself in shape of man,
 As well we know such beings can ;
 And to a sculptor's shop descended,
 Where statues of the gods were vended :
 There *Jupiter* and *Juno* stood,
 In bronze, in marble, and in wood :
Mars and *Minerva* richly drest,
 And *Mercury* amongst the rest.

“ Then,” said he to the sculptor, “ Sir,
 Pray what's the price of *Jupiter* ? ”
 The sum was named without delay :
 “ And what d'ye ask for *Juno*, pray ? ”
 “ A trifle more,” the man replied,
 “ She's more esteem'd than most beside : ”
 “ And what for *that* upon the shelf ? ”
 Said *Mercury*, nodding at himself.

“ O ! ” said the man, “ his worth is small ;
 I never charge for him at all ;
 But when the other gods are bought,
 I always give him in for nought.”

You ask me what I think of you,—
 You're foolish and conceited too :
 No persons thus for praise will seek
 But those who are both vain and weak.

FABLE XXII.

THE BULL AND THE GNAT.

ON the horn of a bullock, alighted a gnat ;
 To which it is likely you'll say, "What of that?"
 I'll tell you : this insect thought he was so great,
 That the beast must be weary with bearing his weight.

"I'm afraid that my pressure disturbs you," said he,
 "You must feel much oppress'd by a person like me ;
 But if for five minutes you'll let me remain,
 I'll remove to some tree which my weight can sustain."

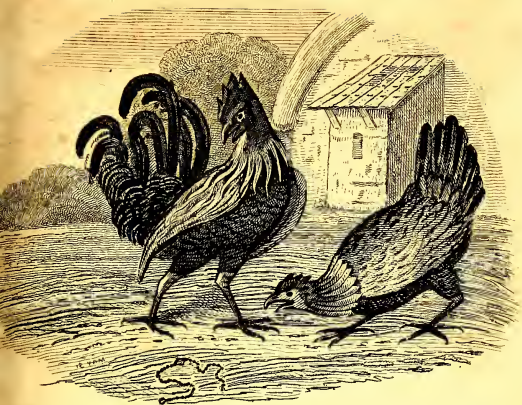
"Sit still and be quiet, I pray," said the beast,
 "Your weight does not burden my neck in the least ;
 Indeed I knew not of your coming, and so
 Shall not miss you whene'er you think proper to go."

'Tis the most insignificant persons, we see,
 Who suppose themselves folks of importance to be.

FABLE XXIII.

THE COCK AND THE JEWEL.

A cock there was :—a sage was he
 (If Esop we may trust),
 Who wish'd to make a meal, you see,
 As other sages must.



The Cock & the Jewel.



The Man & the Lion.



With this intent, as heretofore,
 When on the hunt for grain;
 Our hero scratch'd the litter o'er
 With all his might and main.

But scarce a minute had he scratch'd,
 When, to his great surprise,
 A gem, with golden chain attach'd,
 He saw with both his eyes.

"Alack!" quoth he, "what have we here?
 A diamond, I protest!
 Which lords and ladies buy so dear,
 And hold in such request."

"But one good barley-corn to me
 Has more intrinsic worth,
 Than all the pearls now in the sea,
 Or gold now in the earth."

The moral here in Esop's mind
 Was this, there's not a doubt;
 Things have *most* value, which we find
 We *cannot* do without.

FABLE XXIV.

THE MAN AND THE LION.

A MAN and a lion once had a dispute,
Which was reckon'd the greatest, the man or the brute;
The lion discoursed on his side at some length,
And greatly enlarged on his courage and strength.

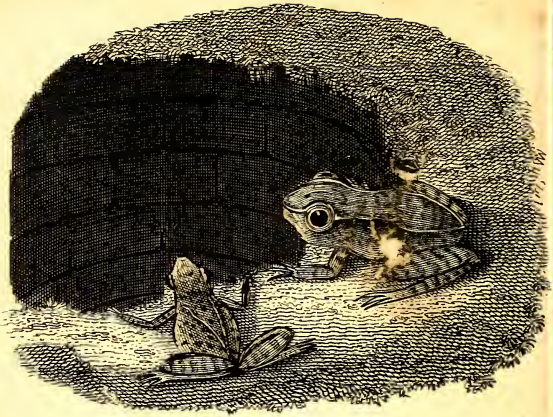
The man, one would think, had enough to reply
On *his* side the question, which none could deny;
But like many others who make a pretence,
He talk'd perfect nonsense, and thought it was sense.

“So,” said he, “don’t be prating,—look yonder, I
pray,
At that sculpture of marble, now what will you say?”
The lion is vanquish’d; but as for the man
He is striding upon him; deny it who can.

“But pray,” said the lion, “who sculptured that
stone?”
“One of *us*,” said the man, “I must candidly own;”
“But when *we* are sculptors,” the other replied,
“You’ll then on the man see the *lion* astride.”

The man might have added, if he had been wise,
“But a beast *cannot* sculpture a stone, *if he tries.*”





The Two Frogs.



The Fox & the Crane.

FABLE XXV.

THE TWO FROGS.

The day was hot,—the heat was dire,
Enough to make a post perspire :
The ponds were empty, pumps were dry,
The ducks were thirsty, so was I.

Two frogs resolved, (quite right, I think)
To take a tour in search of drink ;
And long they sped them on their way,
And many a dangerous leap had they.

But there appear'd a well at length,
Which both approach'd with failing strength ;
But when they gave an anxious peep,
Alas ! 'twas twenty fathoms deep !

“ Well,” said the youngest, “ let’s descend ;”
“ No,” said the other, “ youthful friend ;
For should the water dry *here* too,
I ask thee what we *then* should do.”

Deep was the well,—not quite so deep
Our moral lies,—“ *look ere you leap.*”

FABLE XXVI.

THE FOX AND THE CRANE.

“ I CERTAINLY think,” said a fox to a crane,
“ That face, ma’am, of yours is remarkably plain ;
That beak that you wear is so frightful a feature,
It makes you appear a most singular creature.”

The crane, much offended at what she had heard,
March’d off at full speed, without saying a word ;
“ Oh dear !” said the fox, “ Mrs. Crane, I protest
“ You misunderstood me—’twas only in jest.”

“ Come, don’t be affronted—stay with me and dine ;
You know very well ’tis this temper of mine
To say such odd things to my intimate friends ;
But you know that poor Reynard no mischief intends.”

So the crane thought it best not to break with the fox,
But to take his remarks as an odd fellow’s jokes ;
So she put on as pleasant a face as she could
When he ask’d her to dine, and replied that she would.

But alas ! she perceived that his jokes were not over,
When Reynard removed from the victuals its cover ;
’Twas neither game, butcher’s meat, chicken, nor fish ;
But plain gravy-soup, in a broad shallow dish.

Now this the fox lapp'd with his tongue very quick,
While the crane could scarce dip in the point of her
beak ;

" You make a poor dinner," said he, to his guest,
" O dear ! by no means," said the bird, " I protest."

But the crane ask'd the fox, on a subsequent day,
When nothing, it seems, for their dinner had they
But some minced meat served up in a narrow neck'd jar ;
Too long, and too narrow, for Reynard by far.

" You make a poor dinner, I fear," said the bird ;
" Why, I think," said the fox, "'twould be very absurd
To deny what you say ; yet I cannot complain,
But confess, though a fox, that I'm match'd by a crane."

Cunning folks who play tricks which good manners
condemn,
May find their own tricks play'd again upon them.

FABLE XXVII.

THE TRAVELLER AND THE SATYR.

A luckless wight, in winter's snow,
Travelling once a forest through :
Cold and hungry, tired and wet,
Began in words like these to fret ;

“ Oh ! what a sharp inclement day !
 And what a dismal, dreary way !
 No friendly cot, no cheering fields,
 No food this howling forest yields ;
 I’ve nought in store or expectation ;
 There’s nought before me but starvation.”

“ Not quite so bad,” a voice replied ;
 Quickly the traveller turn’d aside,
 And saw the satyr of the wood,
 Who close beside his dwelling stood.
 “ Here is my cave hard by,” said he,
 “ Walk in, you’re welcome, pray be free.”

The traveller did not hesitate,
 Hoping for something good to eat,
 But follow’d to his heart’s content,
 Blowing his fingers as he went.

“ Pray,” said the satyr, “ may I know,
 “ For what you blow your fingers so ? ”

“ What ! need you,” said the man, “ be told !
 To *warm* my fingers, numb’d with cold.”

“ Indeed ! ” was all his host replied,
 Intent some pottage to provide,
 Which heated well, with spice infused,
 Was to his shivering guest produced :



The Traveller & the Satyr.



The Travellers & the Purse.



So hot it was, as Esop sung,
It made our traveller scald his tongue ;
And wishing not again to do it,
Our hero could not wait, but blew it.

“ What ! ” said his host, in accent rough,
“ Is not your pottage hot enough ? ”

“ Yes,” said the man, “ full well I know it,
'Tis far too hot, that's why I blow it.”

“ You artful villain ! do you so ? ”
His host replied, with angry brow ;
My cave shall not a moment hold
A man that blows both hot and cold !
By none but rogues can that be done :
You double dealing wretch, begone ! ”

The trav'ler scarce deserved such wrath,
For warming fingers—cooling broth.
No statutes old or new forbid it,
Although with the same mouth he did it ;
Yet this beware of, old and young,
What Esop meant—*a double tongue* ;
Which flatters now with civil clack,
And slanders soon behind one's back .

FABLE XXVIII.

THE TRAVELLERS AND THE PURSE.

Two friends once were walking in sociable chat,
 When a purse one espied on the ground ;
 “ Well ! come,” said he, “ thank my good fortune for
 that,
 What a large sum of money I’ve found ! ”

“ Nay, do not say *I*,” said his friend, “ for you know
 ’Tis but justice to share it with me ; ”
 “ I share it with you ! ” said the other, “ How so ?
 He who *found* it, the owner should be.”

“ Be it so,” said his friend, “ but what sound do
 hear ?
 ‘ Stop thief ! ’ one is calling to you ;
 He comes with a constable close in the rear ! ”
 Said the other, “ Oh ! what shall we do ! ”

“ Nay, do not say *we*,” said his friend, “ for you know
 You claim’d the sole right to the prize ;
 And since all the *money* was taken by you,
 With you the *dishonesty* lies.”

When people are selfish, dishonest, and mean,
 Their nature, in dealing, will quickly be seen.

the business in question be pleasure or profit,
 when each thinks of course *he* should have the whole
 of it;
 but if it should happen 'tis danger or toil,
 when indeed they will vote for dividing the spoil.



FABLE XXIX.

THE MOUTH AND THE LIMBS.

IN days of yore, they say, 'twas then
 When all things spoke their mind;
 The arms and legs of certain men,
 To treason felt inclined.

These arms and legs together met,
 As snugly as they could,
 With knees and elbows, hands and feet,
 In discontented mood.

Said they, "'Tis neither right nor fair,
 Nor is there any need,
 To labour with such toil and care,
 The greedy mouth to feed."

"This we're resolved no more to do,
 Though we so long have done it;"
 "Ah!" said the knees and elbows too,
 "And we are bent upon it."

“ I,” said the tongue, “ may surely speak,
 Since his inmate I am ;
 And for his vices while you seek,
 His virtues I’ll proclaim.”

“ You say the mouth embezzles all
 The fruit of your exertion ;
 But I on this assembly call
 To prove the base assertion.”

“ The food which you with labour gain,
 He too with labour chews ;
 Nor does he long the food retain,
 But gives it for your use.”

“ But he his office has resign’d
 To whom you may prefer ;
 He begs you therefore now to find
 Some other treasurer.”

“ Well, be it so,” they all replied ;
 “ His wish shall be obey’d ;
 We think the hands may now be tried
 As treasurers in his stead.”

The hands with joy to this agreed,
 And all to them was paid ;
 But they the treasure kept indeed,
 And no disbursements made.

Once more the clam'rous members met,
 A lean and hungry throng ;
 When all allow'd, from head to feet,
 That what they'd done was wrong.

To take his office once again,
 The mouth they all implored ;
 Who soon accepted it, and then
 Health was again restored.

The mouth has *claims* of large amount
 From arms, legs, feet, and hands ;
 But let them not, on that account,
 Pay *more* than it demands.

FABLE XXX.

THE CONCEITED CUR.

HAVE read in a book of a mischievous dog,
 And whose neck there was fasten'd a large wooden
 log,
 For reasons I need not declare ;
 Not seeming to know for what purpose 'twas made,
 Ran to his friends and acquaintance, and said,
 ' See, what a smart collar I wear !'

“ We see it distinctly,” a mastiff replied ;
 “ But strongly advise you the honour to hide,
 Which is what we should certainly do ;
 For instead of exciting the smallest respect,
 It strongly implies, when we come to reflect,
 That you’ve had a sound horse-whipping too.”

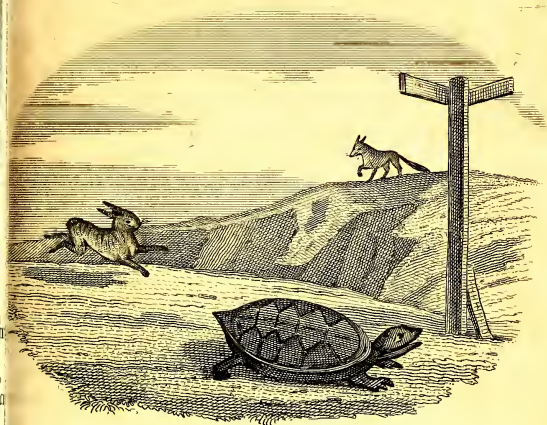
I will not affirm that I ever have known
 Any lad not ashamed his *fool’s-cap* should be shown
 Yet many there are that with ease could be named,
 Who can show their *fool’s tricks* without feeling ashamed

FABLE XXXI.

THE HARE AND THE TORTOISE.

SAID a hare to a tortoise, “ Good sir, what a while
 You have been only crossing the way ;
 Why I really believe that to go half a mile,
 You must travel two nights and a day.

“ I am very contented,” the creature replied,
 “ Though I walk but a tortoise’s pace ;
 But if you think proper the point to decide,
 We will run half a mile in a race.”



The Hare & the Tortoise.



The Honest Woodman.



very good," said the hare; said the tortoise, "proceed,

and the fox shall decide who has won;"

and the hare started off with incredible speed;

but the tortoise walk'd leisurely on.

"Come, tortoise, friend tortoise, walk on," said the hare,

"Well, I shall stay here for my dinner;

'twill take you a month, at that rate, to get there,

then how can you hope to be winner?"

But the tortoise could hear not a word that she said,

she was such a great distance behind;

the hare felt secure whilst at leisure she fed,

and took a sound nap when she'd dined.

At last this slow walker came up with the hare,

and there fast asleep did he spy her;

he cunningly crept with such caution and care,

that she woke not, although he pass'd by her.

"Well now," thought the hare, when she open'd her eyes,

"For the race,—and I soon shall have done it;"

who can describe her chagrin and surprise,

When she found that the *tortoise* had won it!

As plain plodding people, we often shall find,

leave hasty confident people behind.

FABLE XXXII.

THE HONEST WOODMAN.

A CERTAIN man—excuse, I pray,
Commencing in the dog-trot way,
For what, I ask, am I to do
When Esop does not tell me who?—
This man, with many a hearty stroke,
Was cutting down an ancient oak;
When as he smote, his axe's head
Far from its handle quickly sped,
And, to the woodman's great dismay,
Into the river found its way.
“Now tell us why,” the rustic cried,
“Ye could not on the stick abide?
You surely might have stay'd with me
At least till I had fell'd the tree.”
Thus did the man his thoughts express,
And sat him down in great distress;
But had not long reclined himself,
When there appear'd a sprightly elf,
Who ask'd the reason of his grief,
And promised also quick relief.
The man explain'd, the sprite withdrew,
Intent his magic power to shew;
Forthwith he dived beneath the stream,
Full many a fathom, to redeem

This woodman's hatchet,—but behold!
 He found one made of solid gold!
 “Is this the tool you lost?” said he,
 “O no, that ne'er belong'd to me,”
 The man replied: “Then,” said the sprite,
 “I'll try again to get the right.”
 Once more he plunged: once more emerged,
 And now a silver hatchet urged
 On our poor rustic; but the clown
 Too honest was e'en that to own;
 “Well,” said the fairy, “I'll persist
 Till I procure the one you miss'd.”
 Again withdrawn, again return'd,
 The man with joy *his* axe discern'd.
 Said he, “Thou art a friend in need,
 This is my very tool indeed!”
 “Pray take it then,” the elf replied,
 And gave the other two beside;
 But ere the man found what to say,
 The friendly sprite had flown away.

Mean while the man neglected not
 To tell his neighbours what he'd got;
 “Well,” said a friend, “if that be true,
 I'll go and try what *I* can do.”
 Then to the place an axe he took,
 And soon he dropt it in the brook;
 Then sat him down to mourn the same,
 When, as before, the fairy came;

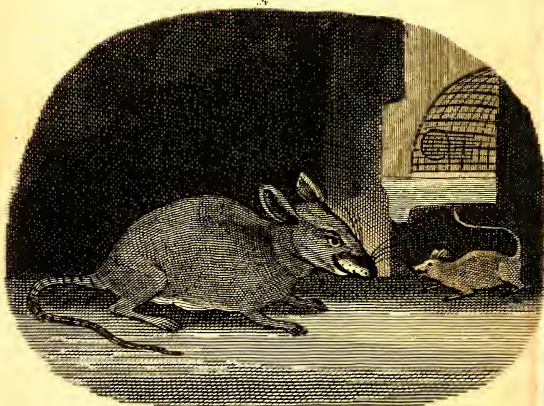
Who, finding how the matter stood,
 Brought a gold hatchet from the flood;
 Then ask'd the man if that were his:
 "O yes!" said he, "indeed it is:
 That is the very self same hatchet:"
 Then tried with eager haste to snatch it.
 But ere the gold was grasp'd by him,
 The sprite return'd it to the stream.
 "Oh!" said the rustic, "woe is me!
 I ne'er again that axe shall see!"
 "Nor yet your *own*," rejoin'd the elf,
 "Unless you make a plunge yourself."

A maxim I shall now rehearse,
 Which suits exactly with my verse;
 That honesty is found to be
 The best and *wisest* policy:
 Although the crafty man disdains
 The honest man, as wanting brains.





The Crow & the Pitcher.



The Young Mouse.

FABLE XXXIII.

THE CROW AND THE PITCHER.

You must know, that a crow
 Felt inclined, when she'd dined,
 For some drink, being thirsty and hot ;
 At puddle or pool, her fever to cool,
 Within twenty miles there was not.

Then said she, " Woe is me !
 Surely I must soon die,"
 When lo ! she espied at a distance
 pitcher or jug, *alias* pipkin or mug,
 Which promised the needed assistance.

" *A propos,*" said the crow,
 " Now I think I shall drink,
 And I shall be there in a minute ;"
 But alas ! for the bird,—still her draught was deferr'd,
 For scarcely a cup-full was in it.

" How provoking ! I'm choaking !"
 Said she ; " but let's see !
 Sure I've thought of a project to gain it ;
 With stones from my bill, the deep jug I will fill,
 When the water will rise, till my thirst it supplies."
 —She did so, and so did obtain it.

Had this two-legg'd thing been as stupid as many,
Though dying for drink she would not have got any.



FABLE XXXIV.

THE YOUNG MOUSE.

IN a crack near a cupboard, with dainties provided,
A certain young mouse with her mother resided ;
So securely they lived on that fortunate spot,
Any mouse in the land might have envied their lot.

But one day this young mouse, who was given to roam
Having made an excursion some way from her home,
On a sudden return'd, with such joy in her eyes,
That her grey, sedate parent express'd some surprise.

“ O mother !” said she, “ the good folks of this
house,
I'm convinced, have not any ill-will to a mouse,
And those tales can't be true which you always are
telling ;
For they've been at the pains to construct us a dwelling

“ The floor is of wood, and the walls are of wires,
Exactly the size that one's comfort requires ;
And I'm sure that we there should have nothing to fear
If ten cats with their kittens at once should appear.

“And then they have made such nice holes in the wall,
One could slip in and out with no trouble at all ;
But forcing one through such rough crannies as these,
Always gives one’s poor ribs a most terrible squeeze.

“ But the best of all is, they’ve provided us well,
With a large piece of cheese of most exquisite smell ;
’Twas so nice, I had put my head in to go through,
When I thought it my duty to come and fetch you.”

“ Ah child !” said her mother, “ believe, I entreat,
Both the cage and the cheese are a horrible cheat :
Do not think all that trouble they took for our *good* ;
They would catch us, and *kill* us all there, if they could,
As they’ve caught and kill’d scores ; and I never could
learn,
That a mouse, who once enter’d, did ever return !”

Let the young people mind what the old people say,
And when danger is near them, keep out of the way.

FABLE XXXV.

THE TOAD AND THE FLY.

WHEN Cadmus lived, in days of yore,
 Three thousand years ago or more:—
 Retired within a shady grot,
 There lived a toad—deny it not,
 Who, thoughtful, sleepy, or sedate,
 Pass'd years away in lonely state.

At last he slept, as it should seem,
 Beside a petrifying stream,
 Which ere he woke to find it out,
 With stone enclosed him, round about;
 So tightly fitted to his shape,
 He could not stretch, nor even gape.
 —O! had he known, ere his repose,
 How many years he had to doze,
 No doubt he would have settled all
 His worldly matters, great and small;
 Nor left his children fighting battles
 About his sundry goods and chattels;
 Who knew not (pardon this digression)
 Whether they ought to take possession.

Three thousand years had he to pass,
 Imbedded in the solid mass :



The Toad & the Fly.



The Milkmaid.



(I hope this message of stone,
 Was *rent free* all this time, I own.)
 However, not a year ago,
 It seems this block was sawn in two ;
 When, to the workman's great surprise,
 The drowsy reptile met their eyes,
 Who issued, from his durance freed,
 A venerable toad indeed.
 Then crowds drew near from far to see
 This remnant of antiquity,
 Who, fully conscious of the fact,
 Their utmost homage did exact.

It happen'd then, there came that way,
 A fly that only lives a day ;
 Who thinking it was rather odd,
 Such rev'rence should be paid a toad,
 First ask'd the reason of the fuss,
 And then address'd the reptile thus :

“ And so,” said he, “ I find it's true,
 This *world's* but twice as old as you ;
 A poor ephemeron am I,
 This day was born, this day must die ;
 Yet I maintain, say what you will,
 My life has been the longest still.”

“ What!” said the toad, with angry hiss,
 “ D'ye mean by such a speech as this?”

“ Sir,” said the fly, with ready breath,
 “ Sleep is another kind of death ;
 Your days, though more than I can number,
 You’ve spent in one continued slumber ;
 My life, though short it is, I own,
 Has never once a slumber known :—
 I do not reckon in the term
 While I remain’d a torpid worm ;
 Nor you the time you must have dozed
 Ere stone around you could have closed ;
 Nor when one’s *half asleep* you see,
 Which you *at present* seem to be ;
 But when one’s broad awake, you know,
 And doing what one has to do,
 As has this very day been done
 By me, a poor ephemeron ;
 Which *single day*, it hence appears,
 Exceeds your long *three thousand years*.”

I’d further add, the sense to fix,
 Lie not till *nine*, but rise at *six* ;
 The longer you can keep awake,
 The longer you your life will make.

FABLE XXXVI.

THE MILKMAID.

A MILKMAID, who poized a full pail on her head,
 Thus mused on her prospects in life, it is said :
 ‘ Let’s see—I should think that this milk will procure
 One hundred good eggs, or fourscore, to be sure.’”

“ Well then—stop a bit :—it must not be forgotten,
 Some of these may be broken, and some may be rotten;
 But if twenty for accidents should be detach’d,
 It will leave me just sixty sound eggs to be hatch’d.

“ Well, sixty sound eggs—no; sound chickens, I mean;
 Of these some may die :—we’ll suppose seventeen,—
 Seventeen!—not so many—say ten at the most,
 Which will leave fifty chickens to boil or to roast.

“ But then there’s their barley : how much will they
 need ?

Why they take but one grain at a time when they feed,
 So that’s a mere trifle :—now then, let us see,
 At a fair market price, how much money there’ll be ?

“ Six shillings a pair—five—four—three-and-six,
 To prevent all mistakes, that low price I will fix ;
 Now what will that make ?—fifty chickens, I said,
 Fifty times three-and-sixpence—I’ll ask brother Ned

“ O ! but stop—three-and-sixpence a *pair* I must
sell ’em ;

Well, a pair is a couple—now then let us tell ’em ;

A couple in fifty will go—(my poor brain !)

Why just a score times, and five pair will remain.

“ Twenty-five pair of fowls—now how plaguesome
it is,

That I can’t reckon up as much money as this !

Well, there’s no use in trying : so let’s give a guess ;

I will say twenty pounds, and *it can’t be no less*.

“ Twenty pounds, I am certain, will buy me a cow,
Thirty geese, and two turkeys—eight pigs and a sow ;
Now if these turn out well, at the end of the year,
I shall fill both my pockets with guineas ’tis clear.

“ Then I’ll bid that old tumble-down hovel good-
bye ;

My mother she’ll scold, and my sisters they’ll cry :

But I won’t care a crow’s egg for all they can say ;

I sha’n’t go to stop with such beggars as they !”

But forgetting her burden, when this she had said,
The maid superciliously toss’d up her head :
When alas ! for her prospects—her milk-pail descended !
And so all her schemes for the future were ended.

This moral, I think, may be safely attach’d ;
Reckon not on your chickens before they are hatch’d.



The Lark & her Young Ones.



The Philosopher & the Acorn.

FABLE XXXVII.

THE LARK AND HER YOUNG ONES.

A LARK who had her nest conceal'd,
 Says Æsop, in a barley field;
 Began, as harvest time drew near,
 The reaping of the corn to fear:
 Afraid they would her nest descry,
 Before her tender brood could fly.
 She charged them therefore ev'ry day,
 Before for food she flew away,
 To watch the farmer in her stead,
 And listen well to all he said.

It chanced one day, she scarce was gone,
 Ere came the farmer, and his son.
 The farmer well his field survey'd,
 And sundry observations made:
 At last, "I'll tell you what," said he,
 "This corn is fit to cut, I see;
 But we our neighbours' help must borrow,
 So tell them we begin to-morrow."

Just after this the lark return'd,
 When from her brood this news she learn'd.
 "Ah! dearest mother," then said they
 "Pray let us all be gone to-day."

“ My dears,” said she, “ you need not fret ;
 I shall not be uneasy yet ;
 For if he waits for neighbours’ aid,
 The business long will be delay’d.”

At dawn she left her nest once more,
 And charged her young ones as before.

At five the farmer came again,
 And waited for his friends in vain.
 “ Well,” said the man, “ I fancy, son,
 These *friends* we can’t depend upon ;
 To-morrow early mind you go
 And let our own *relations* know.”

Again the lark approach’d her nest,
 When round her all her young ones prest,
 And told their mother, word for word,
 The fresh intelligence they’d heard.

“ Ah ! children, be at ease,” said she ;
 “ We’re safe another day, I see ;
 For these *relations*, you will find,
 Just like his *friends*, will stay behind.”

At dawn again the lark withdrew,
 And did again her charge renew.

Once more the farmer early came,
 And found the case was just the same ;
 The day advanced, the sun was high ;
 But not a single help drew nigh.
 Then said the farmer, " Hark-ye, son—
 I see this job will not be done,
 While thus we wait for friends and neighbours ;
 So you and I'll commence our labours :
 To-morrow early we'll begin
Ourselves, and get our harvest in."

" Now," said the lark, when this she'd heard,
 " Our movement must not be deferr'd ;
 For if the farmer and his son
 Themselves begin, 'twill soon be done."

The morrow proved the lark was right ;
 For all was cut and housed by night.

Hence, while we wait for others' aid,
 Our business needs must be delay'd ;
 Which might be done with half the labour
 'Twould take to go and call a neighbour.

FABLE XXXVIII.

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE ACORN.

A PHILOSOPHER, proud of his wit and his reason,
 Sat him under an oak in a hot summer season.
 On the oak grew an acorn or two, it is said :
 On the ground grew a pumpkin as big as his head.

Thought the sage, "What's the reason this oak is so
 strong

A few acorns to bear that are scarce an inch long ;
 While this poor feeble plant has a weight to sustain,
 Which had much better hang on the tree, it is plain?"

But just at the time the philosopher spoke,
 An acorn dropt down on his head from the oak ;
 Then said he, who just now thought *his* plan was so
 clever,
 "I am glad that *this* was not a pumpkin, however."

The sage would no doubt have look'd grievously dull,
 Had a *pumpkin* descended with force on his skull.
 Of his folly then let us in future beware,
 And believe that *such* matters are best as they are :
 Leave the manners and customs of oak-trees alone,
 Of acorns, and pumpkins—and look to our own.

FABLE XXXIX.

THE TWO CATS.

Two cats or dogs, just which you please,
 Purloin'd a piece of Cheshire cheese ;
 But when to part the same they tried,
 They did not seem quite satisfied ;
 But after some small altercation,
 Referr'd the same to arbitration ;
 Entrusting to a monkey's paws,
 The whole disposal of their cause.

“ Now then,” said he, with learned look,
 As in his hands the scales he took ;
 “ You say these bits should weigh the same ;
 But one I see will kick the beam
 Unless I have a bit of t' other :—
 Dear me ! now this out-weighs the other.
 What shall I do ?—another bite
 Yet I must have to get them right.
 Hey day ! they are unequal yet !
 Well, I'll adjust them : do not fret,”
 Said he, and bit another piece,
 From the small remnant of their cheese.

“ Hold ! ” said the cats, “ good sir, refrain,
 And give us back our cheese again.”

"Not so," the learned judge replied,
 "Justice is not yet satisfied;
 A case of consequence, like this,
 I cannot in such haste dismiss;
 Another piece from this must come
 To gain an equilibrium."
 Thus **he** the business did delay,
 Till scarce an ounce was left to weigh.
 Once more the cats, with hunger prest,
 Entreated him to spare the rest.
 "Friends," said the ape, "this piece of cheese
 Will barely pay the judge's fees;"
 Who straight devour'd that morsel too,
 Dismiss'd the court, and then withdrew.

From this I hope you'll plainly see,
 How much they lose who disagree;
 You'd better take a portion small,
 Than go to law and lose it all.

FABLE XL.

THE WOLF AND THE CRANE.

A WOLF, once forgetting the size of his swallow,
 Tried to pass a large marrow-bone through it.
 "Oh dear!" said the beast, thinking death was to
 follow,
 "How careless and stupid to do it!"



The Two Cats.



The Wolf & the Crane.

His mouth was propp'd open by means of the bone,
 and his breathing was greatly impeded ;
 When a crane coming up, he contrived to make known
 What kind of assistance he needed.

“ How d'ye do ? ” said the bird ; said the beast,
 “ Very ill,
 For a bone has gone down the wrong way ;
 But if you can extract it by means of your bill,
 The service I'll amply repay.”

Thought the crane, “ I'm no surgeon ; yet all must
 agree,
 That my beak will make excellent forceps ;
 And as for the money, I do not now see
 Why I need refuse taking his worship's.”

Said the bird, “ It's agreed ; ” said his patient,
 “ Proceed,
 And take the bone hence, I beseech ; ”
 Which, after a while, and with infinite toil,
 The crane at last managed to reach.

“ Thank my stars ! ” said the beast, from his terrors
 released,
 “ Thank you *too*, sir,” said he to the bird :
 Alas ! ” said the crane, “ what is this that you mean ?
 I am waiting the promised reward,”

Said the wolf, " You forget, I've contracted no debt,
 Since the service was *render'd by me* ;
 Your head I released from the jaws of a beast,
 And now you're demanding a fee !"

Give your help to a *wolf*, if he beg for your aid,
 But you must not expect when you've done to be paid.

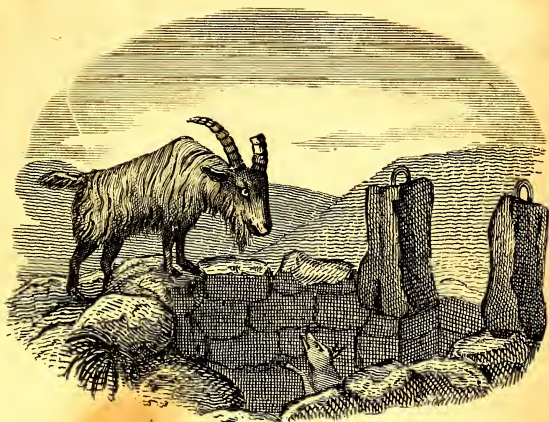
FABLE XLI.

THE FOX AND THE GOAT.

A FOX by chance, and not design,
 Into a well did tumble ;
 So it fell out, that he fell in,
 Which made poor Reynard grumble.

A goat that wish'd to quench his thirst,
 Approach'd the well with haste ;
 But seeing the fox had got there first,
 Ask'd how he liked the taste.

" How ?" said the fox, " these waters are
 Delicious, I assure ye ;
 So wholesome too, that if you were
 Now dying, they would cure ye."



The Fox & the Goat.



The Lame Man & the Blind.



Deceived by this vile fellow's clack,
 The silly goat descended ;
 So Reynard jumping on his back,
 Got out, as he intended.

When we take the advice of a rogue, who can tell
 t 'twill end like the goat jumping into the well.

FABLE XLII.

THE LAME MAN AND THE BLIND.

Two persons once met, in a dangerous place,
 Then each to the other thus open'd his case :
 And one, " Oh ! good Christian, do pray be so kind
 To lend me your aid, for you see I am blind."

Said the other, " Good Christian ! 'tis well that you
 came,

To help me, I pray, for I'm dreadfully lame ! "

" Alas ! " said the blind, " what is now to be done ?

I can run, but can't see : you can see, but can't run."

But at last added he—" 'Tell you what, honest friend ;
 will borrow your eyes, but my legs I will lend ;"

So the cripple consented, and got on his back,
And thus both with safety continued their track.

By this fable you see we've endeavour'd to show,
What a little good-natured contrivance can do.

FABLE XLIII.

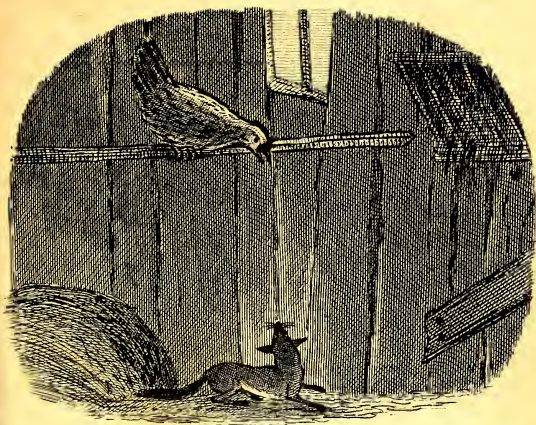
THE FOX AND THE HEN.

A HUNGRY fox, in quest of prey,
Into an out-house found his way,
When looking round with skilful search,
He 'spied a hen upon the perch.

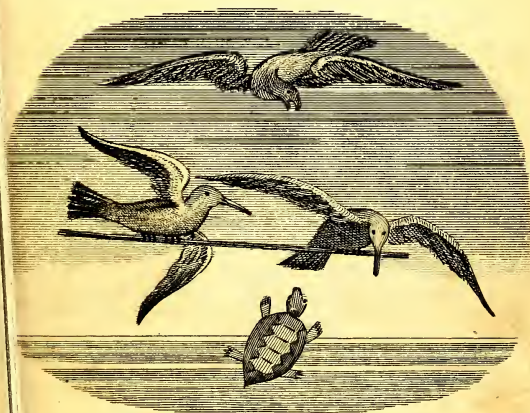
Thought Reynard, "What's the reason why
They place her on a roost so high?
I know not what the use can be,
Unless it's out of spite to me."

As thus he thought, the hen awoke,
When thus to her sly Reynard spoke.

"Dear madam, I'm concern'd to hear,
You've been unwell for half a year;



The Fox & the Hen.



The Tortoise.



I could not quell my strong desire
 After your welfare to inquire ;
 But pray come down and take the air ;
 You'll ne'er get well while sitting there ;
 I'm sure it will not hurt your cough,
 —Do give me leave to help you off."

" I thank you, sir," the hen replied,
 " I'd rather on my roost abide ;
 'Tis true enough, I've been unwell,
 And am so now, the truth to tell ;
 And I'm so nervous, you must know,
 I dare not trust myself below,
 And therefore say to those who call,
 I see no company at all ;
 For from my perch should I descend,
 I'm certain in my death 'twould end ;
 As then, I know, without presumption,
 My cough would end in *a consumption*."

Thus *cunning* people often find
 Their crafty overtures declined,
 By *prudent* people, whom they thought,
 For want of wit, would soon be caught.

FABLE XLIV.

THE TORTOISE.

ONCE a tortoise complain'd (though 'twas not
 much use),
 That he scarce could see over the back of a goose;
 That his legs were so short, and his pace was so slow
 Of the world and its wonders he nothing could know

So at last he determin'd to alter his lot,
 Or at least for a season to rise from that spot;
 So he mention'd his thoughts to a bird that he knew,
 Who agreed to oblige him and give him a view.

So this bird, and another, supported a stick,
 Which was not very heavy, or clumsy, or thick;
 This the tortoise enclosed in his mouth very tight,
 While the birds soon ascended a wonderful height.

But an eagle who chanced the strange creature
 see,
 Exclaim'd with amazement, " Pray who can that be?
 " O, the king of the tortoises! do not you know him?
 Said they, " 'tis our honour his kingdom to show him.

Said the bird, " Ere I take that as true, I mu
 pause;"
 The tortoise impatient, then open'd his jaws





The Dog of Reflection.



The Travellers & Bear.

confirm his new title, when straight he descended!
 his journey, and reign, and existence were ended!

far had the tortoise to fall, they relate,
 he'd time while descending to muse on his fate.
 "!" thought he, "thus I pay for my foolish ambi-
 tion,
 I would not be content with a humble condition;
 might have hung safely, I cannot deny,
 my mouth not been open'd to utter *a lie*."

FABLE XLV.

THE DOG OF REFLECTION.

growing thinner, for want of a dinner,
 he purloin'd him a joint from a tray;
 "how happy I am, with this shoulder of lamb!"
 thought the cur as he trotted away.

the way that he took, lay just over a brook,
 which he found it was needful to cross;
 without more ado, he plunged in to go through,
 not dreaming of danger or loss.

what should appear, in this rivulet clear,
 he thought upon coolest reflection,

But a cur like himself, who with ill-gotten pelf,
Had run off in that very direction.

Thought the dog, *à propos !* but that instant let go
(As he snatch'd at this same water spaniel)
The piece he possess'd :—so with hunger distress'd
He slowly walk'd home to his kennel.

Hence, when we are needy, don't let us be greedy
(Excuse me this line of digression,)
Lest in snatching at all, like the dog, we let fall
The good that we have in possession.

FABLE XLVI.

THE TRAVELLERS AND BEAR.

Two trav'lers one morning set out from their home
It might be from *Sparta*, from *Athens*, or *Rome* ;
It matters not which, but agreed, it is said,
Should danger arise, to lend each other aid.

And so it fell out, that they had not gone far,
Before from a thicket came rushing a bear ;
When one of our heroes, with courage immense,
Climb'd into a tree, and there found his defence.

The other fell flat to the earth with his dread,
 When the bear came and smelt him, and thought he
 was dead ;
 So not liking the carcase, away trotted he,
 When straight our brave hero descended the tree.
 “ Pray brother,” said he, “ what was said by the
 bear,
 When his mouth he presented so close to your ear ? ”
 Why this,” said the other, “ he told me to do,
 To beware for the future of cowards like you.”

Those people who run from their friends in distress,
 Will be left when *themselves* are in trouble, I guess.

FABLE XLVII.

THE FROGS AND THE BULL.

A BULL once treading near a bog,
 Displaced the entrails of a frog,
 Who near his foot did trust them ;
 In fact, so great was the contusion,
 And made of his inwards such confusion,
 No art could re-adjust them.

It chanced that some who saw his fate,
 Did to a friend the deed relate,
 With croakings, groans, and hisses ;
 “ The beast,” said they, “ in size excell’d
 All other beasts,”—their neighbour swell’d,
 And ask’d, “ As large as this is ! ”

“ O ! larger far than that,” said they,
 “ Do not attempt it, madam, pray ; ”
 But still the frog distended,
 And said, “ I’ll burst, but I’ll exceed,”—
 She tried, and burst herself indeed !
 And so the matter ended.

Should you with pride inflate and swell,
 As did the frog : then who can tell !
 Your sides may crack, as has been shown,
 And we with laughing crack our own.

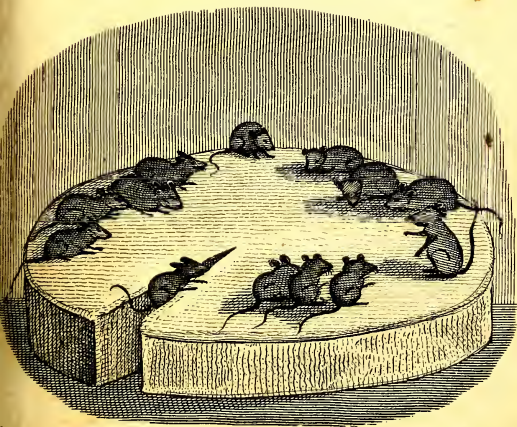
FABLE XLVIII.

THE COUNCIL OF MICE.

SOME mice who saw fit, once a quarter to meet,
 To arrange the concerns of their city ;
 Thought it needful to choose, as is common with us,
 First a chairman, and then a committee.



The Frogs & the Bull.



The Council of Mice.

When the chairman was seated, the object he stated
 For which at that meeting they sat;
 Which was, it should seem, the concerting a scheme
 To defeat the designs of the cat.

Dr. Nibble-cheese rose, and said, "I would propose,
 To this cat that we fasten a bell :
 He who likes what I've said, now will hold up his head ;
 He who does not, may hold up his tail."

So out of respect, they their noses erect,
 Except one who the order reversed ;
Ayes, all then but one, but yet nought could be done,
 Until he had his reasons rehearsed.

"I shall not," said this mouse, "waste the time of the
 house
 In long arguments; since, as I view it,
 The scheme would succeed, without doubt, if indeed
 We could find any mouse who would *do it*."

"Hear! hear!" was the cry, and "no bells we will
 try,
 Unless you will fasten them on ;"
 So quite broken-hearted the members departed,
 For the bill was rejected *nem. con*.

Then be not too hasty in giving advice,
 Lest your schemes should remind of the council of
 mice ;
 You had better delay your opinion a year,
 Than put forth a ridiculous one, it is clear.

FABLE XLIX.

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB.

A WOLF and lamb, once chanced to meet,
 Beside a stream, whose waters sweet
 Brought various kinds of beasts together,
 When dry and sultry was the weather ;
 Now though the wolf came there to *drink*,
 Of *eating*, he began to think,
 As soon as he espied the lamb,
 And straight resolved to kill the same ;
 Yet thought it better to begin,
 With threat'ning words and angry mien.

“ And so,” said he to him below,
 “ How dare you stir the water so ?
 Making the cool refreshing flood
 As brown as beer, and thick as mud.”





The Wolf & the Lamb.



The Beasts in Partnership.

“ Sir,” said the lamb, “ that cannot be,
The water flows *from you to me* ;
So ’tis impossible, I think,
That what I do can spoil your drink.”

“ I say it does, you saucy puss :
How dare you contradict me thus :
But more than this, you idle clack,
You rail’d at me behind my back
Two years ago, I have been told ; ”
“ How so ? I’m not a twelvemonth old,”
The lamb replied ; “ so I suspect
Your honour is not quite correct.”

“ If not, your mother it must be,
And that comes all the same to me,”
Rejoin’d the wolf—who waited not,
But kill’d and ate him on the spot.

Some, like the wolf, adopt the plan,
To make a quarrel *if they can* ;
But none with you *can* hold dispute,
If you’re *determined* to be mute ;
For sure this proverb must be true,
That ev’ry *quarrel* must have two.

FABLE L.

THE BEASTS IN PARTNERSHIP.

THIS *firm* once existed, I'd have you to know,
 Messrs. Lion, Wolf, Tiger, Fox, Leopard, and Co.;
 These in business were join'd, and of course 'twas im-
 plied,
 They their stocks should unite, and the profits di-
 vide.

Now the fable relates, it so happen'd one day,
 That their efforts combined, made a bullock their prey;
 But agreed that the Lion should make the division,
 And patiently waited the monarch's decision.

"My friends," said the Lion, "I've parted, you see,
 The whole into six, which is right, you'll agree;
 One part I may claim, as my share in the trade,
 "O! take it and welcome," they all of them said.

"I claim too the second; since no one denies
 'Twas my courage and conduct that gain'd you the
 prize:
 And *this*," said he, laying his paw on the third,
 "This belongs to the manor of which I am Lord."

“ Hey day !” said the fox ; “ Stop a bit,” said the lion,

“ I have not quite done,” said he, fixing his eye on The other three parts ; “ you are fully aware, That, as *tribute*, one other part comes to my share.”

“ And, I think, ’twould be prudent, the next to put by

Somewhere safe in *my* den for a future supply,
And the other, you know, will but barely suffice,
To pay those expences which always arise.”

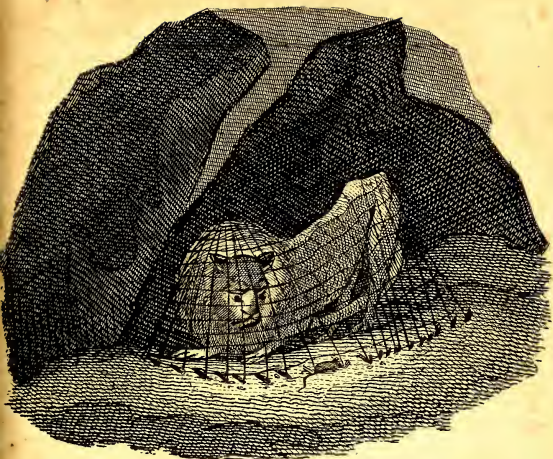
“ If this be the case,” said the fox, “ I discern
That the business to *us* is a losing concern ;
If so, to withdraw, I should think would be best ;
“ O yes ! let us break up the firm,” said the rest ;
And so, though you may not have heard of it yet,
It was quickly dissolved, but not in *the gazette*.

Some folks in their dealings, like him in the fable,
Will take others’ shares, if they think they are able ;
But let them not wonder who act in this way,
If they find none will join them in business or play.

FABLE LI.

THE LION AND THE MOUSE.

A LION, with the heat oppress'd,
One day composed himself to rest ;
But while his nap he thought to take,
A mouse walk'd up his royal back ;
Nor thought of harm, as Esop tells,
Mistaking him for something else,
And travell'd over him, and round him,
And might have left him as he found him,
Had he not,—tremble when you hear,
Tried to explore the monarch's ear !
Who straightway woke with wrath immense,
And shook his head to cast him thence.
“ You rascal, what are you about,”
Said he when he had turn'd him out.
“ I'll teach you soon,” the lion said,
“ To make a mouse-hole in my head ! ”
So saying, he prepared his foot,
To crush the trembling tiny brute ;
But he (the mouse) with tearful eye,
Implored the lion's clemency,
Who thought it best at last to give
His little pris'ner a reprieve.



The Lion & the Mouse.



The Jealous Ass.



'Twas nearly twelve-months after this,
The lion chanced his way to miss ;
When pressing on, with wayward feet,
He got entangled in a net.
With dreadful rage he stamp and tore,
And straight commenced a lordly roar ;
When the poor mouse, who heard the noise,
Attended, for she knew his voice.
Then what the lion's utmost strength
Could not effect, she did at length :
With patient labour she applied
Her teeth, the net-work to divide ;
And so at last forth issued he,
A lion, by a mouse set free.

Few are so small, or weak, I guess,
But may assist us in distress ;
Nor shall we ever, if we're wise,
The meanest, or the least, despise.

FABLE LII.

THE JEALOUS ASS.

“ THERE lived,” says friend Esop, “ some ages ago,
 An ass who had feelings acute, you must know ;
 This ass to be jealous, *felt* strongly inclined,
 And for reasons which follow, *felt* hurt in his mind.

It seems that his master, as I understand,
 Had a favourite dog which he fed from his hand.
 Nay, the dog was permitted to jump on his knee :
 An honour that vex’d our poor donkey to see.

“ Now,” thought he, “ what’s the reason—I cannot
 see any,
 That I have no favours, while he has so many ?
 If all this is got by just wagging his tail,
 Why *I* have got one, which I’ll wag without fail.”

So the donkey (resolved to try what he could do,
 And determined unusual attentions to shew,)
 When his master was dining came into the room.
 —“ Good sir ! ” said his friends, “ why your donkey
 is come ! ”

“ Indeed ! ” said their host, great astonishment showing,
 When he saw the ass come, while his tail was a-going ;

But who can describe his dismay or his fear,
When the donkey rear'd up and bray'd loud in his ear !

“ You rascal, get down,—John, Edward, or Dick !
Where are you ? make haste, and come here with a
stick.”

The man roar'd—his guests laugh'd—the dog bark'd—
the bell rung ;

Coals, poker, and tongs, at the donkey were flung,

Till the blows and the kicks, with combined demon-
station,

Convinced him that this was a bad speculation ;

So, mortified deeply, his footsteps retrod he,

Hurt much in his mind, but still more in his body.

So some silly children, as stupid as may be,
Will cry for indulgences fit for a baby.

Had they enter'd the room while the donkey withdrew,

They'd have seen their own folly and punishment too :

Let them think of this fable, and what came to pass ;

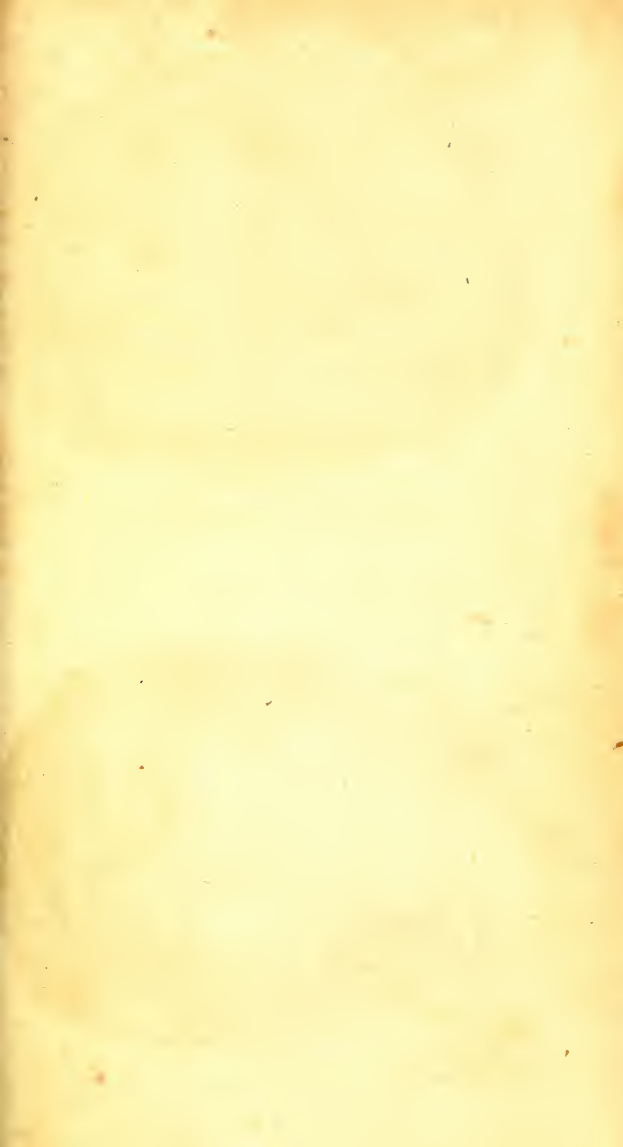
Nor forget,—he who play'd this fine game was *an ass*.

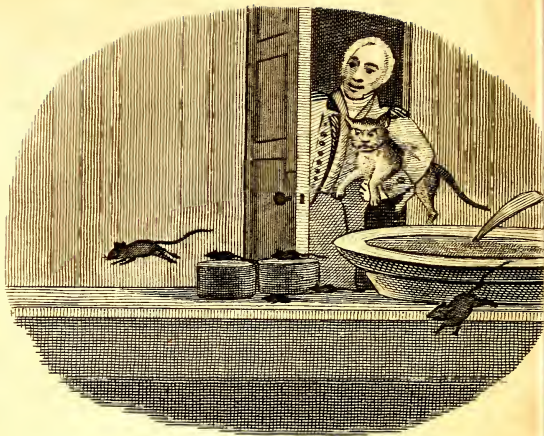
FABLE LIII.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY MICE.

A PLAIN, but honest, country mouse,
 Residing in a miller's house ;
 Once, on a time, invited down
 An old acquaintance of the town :
 And soon he brought his dainties out ;
 The best he had, there's not a doubt.
 A dish of oat-meal, and grey peas,
 With half a candle, and some cheese ;
 Some beans, and, if I'm not mistaken,
 A charming piece of Yorkshire bacon.
 And then to show he was expert
 In such affairs, a fine dessert
 Was next produced, all which he press'd,
 With rustic freedom, on his guest.

But he, the city epicure,
 This homely fare could not endure ;
 Indeed, he scarcely broke his fast
 By what he took, but said, at last,
 " Old crony, now, I'll tell you what ;
 I don't admire this lonely spot ;
 This dreadful, dismal, dirty hole,
 Seems more adapted for a mole
 Than 'tis for you ; O ! could you see
My residence, how charm'd you'd be,





The Town & Country Mice.



The Cat & the Fox.

Instead of bringing up your brood
 In wind, and wet, and solitude,
 Come, bring them all at once to town,
 We'll make a courtier of a clown.
 I think that, for your children's sake,
 'Tis proper my advice to take."

" Well," said his host, " I can but try,
 And so poor quiet hole good bye !"

Then off they jogg'd for many a mile,
 Talking of splendid things the while ;
 At last, in town they all arrived—
 Found where the city mouse had lived—
 Enter'd at midnight through a crack,
 And rested from their tedious track.

" Now," said the city mouse, " I'll show
 What kind of fare I've brought you to : "
 On which he led the rustic mice
 Into a larder, snug and nice,
 Where ev'ry thing a mouse could relish,
 Did ev'ry shelf and nook embellish.

" Now is not this to be preferr'd
 To your grey peas ? " " Upon my word
 It is," the country mouse replied,
 " All this must needs the point decide,"

Scarce had they spoke these words, when, lo !
 A tribe of servants hasten'd through,
 And also two gigantic cats,
 Who spied our country mouse and brats.
 Then, by a timely exit, she
 Just saved herself and family.

“ Oh ! ask me not,” said she in haste,
 “ Your tempting dainties more to taste ;
 I much prefer my homely peas,
 To splendid dangers such as these.”

Let London coxcombs smartly drest,
 Make us poor country folks their jest ;
 But let them not with us compare :
Clowns are not fools ; but *dandies* are.

FABLE LIV.

THE CAT AND THE FOX.

A CAT and a fox held a long consultation
 Concerning the times, and the state of the nation ;
 When the aspect of things led them both to infer,
 That a grand revolution must shortly occur.

Said the fox, "For *my country*, it is that I fear,
 For, as to *myself*, I can always get clear ;
 I have not, at present, much reason to fret,
 For I've got a thousand new schemes for them yet."

"Indeed !" said the cat, "as for me, I've but one,
 And if that should fail I'm for ever undone ;
 The only protection remaining for me,
 When the enemy comes, I must find in a tree."

"A very poor prospect," said Reynard, "I trow."
 "But see !" said the cat, "they're approaching us
 now !"

Then each to his mode of escaping betook,
 The fox to his schemes, and the cat to an oak,
 Who found in the trees he could safely remain ;
 While the fox with his thousand manœuvres was slain.

Hence it needs must appear, that when danger is
 near,
 Then sly, cunning folks have most reason to fear.

FABLE LV.

THE WASP AND THE SNAIL.

“ You ugly brown creature get out of my way,”
 Said a wasp to a snail on a fine summer’s day ;
 “ But how *can* you move, poor contemptible thing,
 With that load, and with neither a leg nor a wing.”

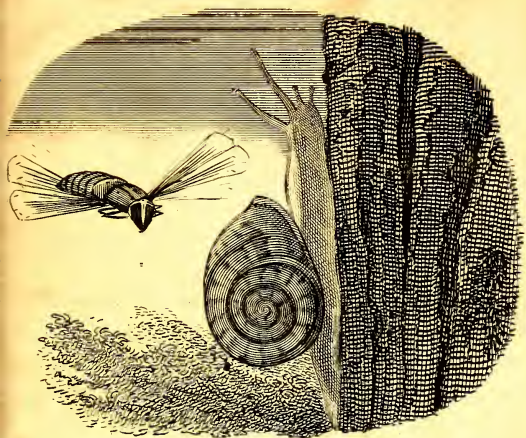
“ O dear ! if I had such a burden as you,
 I cannot imagine what thing I could do :
 I think, though, I e’en should go out of my mind,
 If I to that clumsy great shell were confined.”

But the snail, so resign’d and contented was he,
 Still pursued his dull course up the stem of the tree ;
 These remarks on his person could give him no pain,
 Seeing he of his blandishments never was vain.

Though it took him all day a small distance to climb,
 Yet his business was always transacted in time ;
 And, as for his shell, it will quickly be seen
 How glad of its shelter the wasp would have been.

For the wasp, somewhat vex’d that he could not
 prevail

And extort a reply from this peaceable snail,
 Resolving to do something now he *must* heed,
 Determined to try how his *sting* would succeed.



The Wasp & the Snail.



The Fox & the Crow.



But, alas! for the wasp!—while with petulance fierce,
 The snail's shell he vainly endeavour'd to pierce,
 A slight blow was given, by one so expert,
 That the insect was crush'd, while the snail was unhurt.

This moral, I think, may be safely applied,
 And perhaps it occur'd to the wasp ere he died;
 Those who proudly insult their poor neighbours, will
 find
 That a punishment follows them closely behind.

FABLE LVI.

THE FOX AND THE CROW.

CROWS feed upon worms: yet an author affirms,
 Cheshire cheese they will get if they're able;
 "For," said he, "I well know, one unprincipled crow
 Once purloin'd a large piece from my table."

Then away darted she, to the shade of a tree,
 To deposit the booty within her;
 But it never occur'd to the mind of the bird,
 That a *fox* was to have it for dinner.

"How many a slip, 'twixt the cup and the lip,"
 (Excuse me, I pray, the digression),

Said a fox to himself, "I can share in the pelf,
If I act with my usual discretion."

So said he, "Is it you? pray, ma'am, how do you do,
I have long wish'd to pay you a visit;
For a twelvemonth has pass'd, since I heard of you last,
Which is not very neighbourly, is it?"

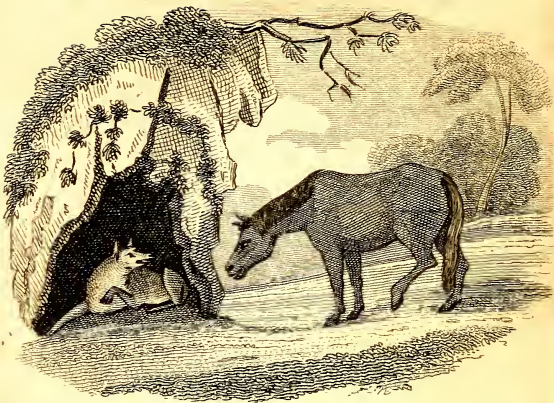
"But, dear madam," said he, "you are dining, I see;
On that subject I'd ask your advice;
Pray, ma'am, now can you tell, where provisions they
sell,
That are not an extravagant price?"

—"Bread and meat are so dear, and have been for a year,
That poor people can scarcely endure it;
And then *cheese is so high*, that such beggars as I,
Till it falls, cannot hope to procure it."

But the ill-behaved bird did not utter a word,
Still intent on retaining her plunder;
Thought the fox, "It should seem, this is not a good
scheme,
What else can I think of, I wonder?"

So said Reynard once more, "I ne'er knew it before,
But your feathers are whiter than snow is!"
But thought he, when he'd said it, "she'll ne'er give
it credit,
For what bird is so black as a crow is."





D^r Wolf.



The Council of War.

‘ But I’m told that your voice is a horrible noise,
Which they say of all sounds is the oddest ;
But then this is absurd, for it never is heard,
Since you are so excessively modest.’”

‘ If *that’s* all,” thought the crow, “ I will soon let you
know

That all doubt on *that* score may be ended ;”
Then most laughably piped, the poor silly biped,
When quickly her dinner descended !

If this *biped* had not been so vain and conceited,
She would not by the fox quite so soon have been
cheated ;

But perhaps the term *biped* to some may be new :
’Tis a two-legged creature—perchance it is *you*.

FABLE LVII.

DR. WOLF.

A WOLF, grown too old for the chase, it should seem,
To accomplish his ends, tried the following scheme.
He gave out that he was an able physician ;
Had studied diseases, as well as nutrition ;
Could amputate either at shoulder or knee,
And only demanded the limb as his fee ;

But *that* he remark'd was but seldom required,
 As *bleeding* would have the effect he desired.
 So from five in the morning each day until ten,
 Was the time that he fix'd, to be seen at his den.
 Then many who thought themselves rather unwell,
 Repair'd to the Doctor, their symptoms to tell.
 And thus far is certain, that none of them all
 Had the smallest return of disorder at all.

Said a fox, "There's one thing that looks odd, to be
 sure,
 It is Doctor Wolf's practice to *kill* or to cure;
 But I should be glad to be told, I must own,
 Before I apply, *which* of those he has done."

"Thank you, friend," said a horse, "for your prudent remark,
 I'm afraid that till now we have been in the dark;
 But I'll sift his intentions, and if they are ill,
 I will give him a tooth of his *own* for a pill."

So saying, the horse trotted off at full speed,
 To request the advice he pretended to need;
 Who had scarcely arrived, when the bones in the place
 Soon convinced him the fox had judged right in this case.

So without more ado he went up to the brute,
 And just begg'd him to look at a thorn in his foot;
 Then while the wolf look'd at his hoof, you must know,
 The horse kick'd all his teeth down his throat at a blow!

And then calling aloud to his friends for assistance,
 The poor toothless beast, who could make no resistance,
 Was directly dispatch'd, without trial or jury,
 To the infinite joy of the beasts, I assure ye.

I do not profess to commend the old horse
 For the steps that he took in this business, of course ;
 Yet this I may say, and be perfectly fair,
 From the fate of the wolf, let impostors beware.

FABLE LVIII.

THE COUNCIL OF WAR.

SOME wars are call'd civil, though all are agreed,
 That to fight one is very *uncivil* indeed ;
 Nor can it as much better manners be view'd,
 To blow out one's brains—which is certainly rude ;
 But to dwell on that topic is not my design,
 Seeing that I admit is no business of mine :
 'Twill suffice for my purpose, if I should be able
 To furnish you thence with an innocent fable.

It was during those wars, whether civil or not,
 When neighbours and brothers both quarrell'd and
 fought,

That a town long besieged by the enemy's forces,
 And having no walls, and but slender resources,
 At length call'd a council of war to propose
 Certain means of defence from the guns of their foes.

First a mason stood up, and observed, 'twas well
 known,
 That no substance resisted the bullets like *stone* ;
 But that plan was rejected forthwith, on the ground
 That no money or time for it then could be found.

A carpenter next for a few minutes spoke,
 And *he* thought 'twould be best to defend it with *oak*.

"Not with *oak*," said a blacksmith, "with *iron* you
 mean,
I could forge such a bulwark as never was seen ;
 Do but give me the order ; I shall not be long ;
 I'll away to my anvil, and hammer ding dong."
 "Hold your tongue, you're a madman," said one of
 the mob ,
 Said another, "He wants to get hold of a job."

Then a builder was sure *lath and plaister* would do ;
 Said a surgeon, "O ! *I'll* spread the *plaister* for you ;
 But then as to the *laths*, I should question their use."
 "O, sir," said the builder, "you talk like a goose !"
 "Order ! order ! my friends," said the chairman, "I
 pray,
 I must beg for the future you'll mind what you say."

Then a shoe-maker said, though their projects were
many,

That *he* had got one that was better than any :

' Hang your walls with new boots from the top to the
bottom ;

' Not a bullet can pierce them,—the wet will not rot 'em ;"

This a tanner approved, but he added besides,

That he thought 'twould be far better done with *whole
hides*.

Next there stood up a man whom all *thought* was a
fool ;

For he said they had best clothe their buildings with
wool.

" What, with *wool*?" said the rest ; " Yes, with *wool*,"
said the man,

" O dear !" said they, " what a ridiculous plan !"

Said the other, " I see that I shall not be heeded,

Yet I know of an instance in which it succeeded." *

But at last from an attic o'erlooking the place,

An odd voice was perceived, and soon after a face ;

He's an *author*, said some, you may know by his looks,

" Ah !" said he, " you are right ; *make a wall of my
books* !"

* During the siege of Colchester, a flint steeple was covered
with wool sacks, which resisted the shot, and preserved the
building.

Then said one of the crowd, who apparently knew
them,

“ You cannot do better, *for none can get through them !*

Then the author withdrew from the insults of men,
Meekly shut to his window, and took up his pen.

Thus scheme after scheme was proposed by them all
For defending their houses, and building a wall ;
And this it appears was at last the end of it ;
While each was consulting his personal profit,
And disputing, and proving his neighbours in fault,
The enemy carried the place by assault ;
So that ruin complete, and destruction, befel it,
And not any escaped but the *author*, to tell it.

We may learn, if we please, from a fable like this,
How absurd and contemptible *selfishness* is ;
For you see 'twas this sordid and selfish committee
Which ruin'd completely themselves and their city.

ORIGINAL FABLES.

FABLE I.

THE OLD WOMAN AND THE DEATH-WATCH.

THERE was an old woman, I cannot tell who ;
But if you're a *young* one, it could not be you ;
Who sitting quite still, and not speaking a word,
Was greatly disturb'd by a ticking she heard.

“ Oh ! alack ! a *death-watch*,” said the dame, I declare,
“ I wish you'd have done,” said she, jogging her
chair ;
“ I had rather hear five hundred pigs in a breath,
Than that frightful ticking, that augurs my death.”

Said the insect, “ Old Dame, that must be a mis-
take :

You know not at all why this ticking I make ;
If I choose to keep knocking my head as I do,
I am certain of this, that it's nothing to you.”

“ But there *is* a sound which you constantly hear,
That old folks and young have more reason to fear ;
That *clock* as it ticks, nibbles *minutes* away,
The stuff *life* is made of, as I have heard say.

“Cunning men, their machines, and their engines
among,

Never yet made a mill to grind *old* women *young*;
But there if you look you'll not fail to behold,
A mill that *for certain* grinds *young* people *old*;
And more than all this, that machine, it is said,
Grinds old people *older*, until they are *dead*!”



FABLE II.

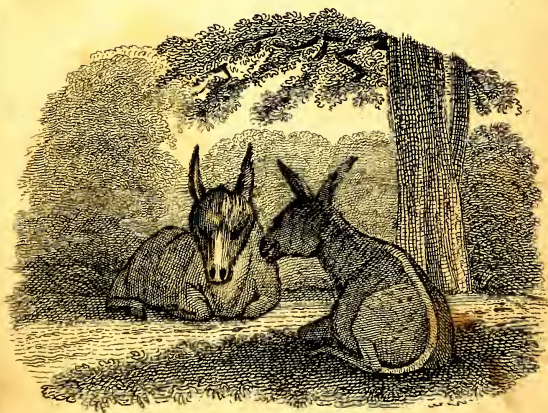
THE DONKEY'S DIALOGUE.

'Twas in a shady, cool, retreat,
Two friendly donkeys chanced to meet,
Who, resting from a tedious walk,
Laid down, and soon began to talk.

“Well met,” said one,—“good morning, brother!”
“Aha! good morning,” said the other;
—“A cloudy day, shall we have thunder?”
“Sir,” said his friend, “I should not wonder;
The cattle seem for shelter going,
The sheep are bleating, cows are lowing,
The frogs are croaking, geese are wheezing,
Pigs are grunting, cats are sneezing,
And as for me, I'm well aware
There must be something in the air;



The Old Woman & the Deathwatch.



The Donkey's Dialogue.

For I've got such a cold to-day,
And am so hoarse, I scarce can bray."

"Well," said the other, "who'd have thought it!
Surely this south-west wind has brought it;
For *I've* a cold, but I suppose,
Mine must have settled in my nose;
For I've entirely lost my smell,
Although I *bray* exceeding well."

"Ah!" said his friend, "beyond dispute,
A donkey's nerves are more acute
Than those of men, who ne'er foresee
A thunder-storm so soon as we,
And don't you think although we're asses,
Our *sense* and *reason* their's surpasses?"

"Why don't you know," his friend replied,
"Our reason is by them denied;
When told of brutes' sagacity,
They have the strange audacity
To say 'tis *instinct*, and maintain
We've nothing else to guide our brain!
Yet brutes do nothing half so silly,
As I've seen done by *Master Billy*;
I've known him go and tie the grass,
Across the way where people pass;
Or push his play-mates in the dirt,
Not caring much if they were hurt;

This the sole object of his labours,
 To please himself and plague his neighbours.
 'Twas not ten days ago I think,
 As I was stooping down to drink,
 His *sense* and *reason* to discover,
 He needs must turn the water over;
 Then when he'd overset the pail,
 He came and tied it to my tail.
 Now is this wise, or is it not?
 Pray is it reason, sense, or what?
 If it be *reason*, there's no doubt
 'Tis better far to be without;
 And if 'tis *instinct*, then I say,
 We have a *better sort* than they;
 But I'm convinced these actions shew
 That they have *neither* of the two."

FABLE III.

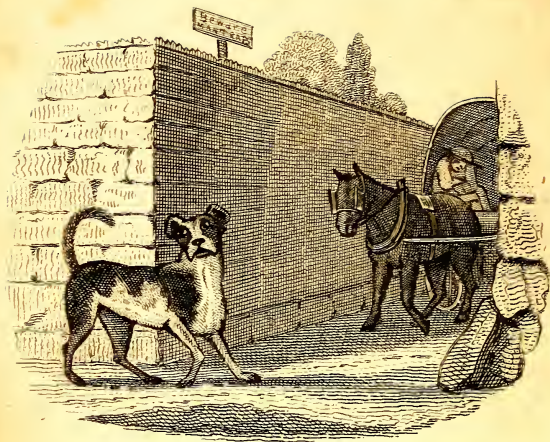
THE PRIDE OF THE COBLER'S DOG.

A DOG of a cobbler (forgive me I pray!
 Which *belong'd* to a cobbler, I rather should say,)

This dog like a great many others beside,
 Whose stations are humble, was troubled with pride.

Thought he, "I can see no good reason at all,
 Why I should turn out to give others the wall;"





The Cobler's Dog.



Peter the Great.

The next time I meet them whoever they be,
I'll make *them* remove to give passage to me."

So saying he trotted full speed up the road,
And soon met a horse, and a cart with a load;
Now it happen'd the way was so narrow just there,
There was room for the cart, but not any to spare.

But the mastiff, so great was the pride of his heart,
Prest onward with haste 'twixt the wall and the cart;
When alas! for our hero! his brains and his neck,
And his ribs and his bowels went quickly to wreck!

This confession was wrung from the dog ere he
died,
"Now, indeed, I repent my ridiculous pride."

FABLE IV.

PETER THE GREAT.

A CERTAIN man, as some do say,
Who liv'd in peace and quiet,
Did line his inside every day
With most nutritious diet.

“ For sure,” thought he, as skilfully
 The mutton he did carve,
 “ Twould be exceeding wrong in me
 My body for to starve.”

His body, measured round about,
 When his great coat was on,
 Was four good yards there’s not a doubt;
 His weight was forty stone.

Peter the Great, I do aver,
 He was without pretence;
 Judging from his diameter,
 And his circumference.

No wonder then this Briton bold
 To stir him should be loth;
 His arms reluctant he would fold;
 His legs unwilling both.

And yet his loving wife would say,
 “ Peter, thou art to blame;
 Thou didst not stir out yesterday,
 To-day ’tis all the same.”

“ Ah! Judith, dear, I doubt,” said he,
 “ My stirring days are past;
 For look y’ yonder, don’t ye see,
 My shadow lengthens fast.”

“ Not so,” quoth Judith, “ if I’m right,
 Thou surely must be wrong ;
 Thy shadow seems unto my sight
 As broad as it is long.”

Thus pleasantly, to make him glad,
 She answer’d him alway ;
 Till he at last, with sorrow sad,
 Unto his wife did say ;

“ Judith, I am not well at all,
 Within I’m sore distress ;
 I fear I’m ill with what they call
 A load upon the chest.”

“ I know not when I’ve felt so bad ;
 I think, say what you will,
 That goose that yesterday I had
 Is in my stomach still !”

“ Haste for the doctor ere he’s out,
 For he may be of use ;
 Tell him my feet have got the gout,
 My stomach’s got the goose.”

The dame approved her husband’s thought,
 As heretofore she did ;
 For long ago she had been taught
 To do as she was bid.

Said she, " I go ; but it may be,
 Some time I shall be gone ;
 So 'twill be better first for me
 To put the boiler on."

" For if by reason of your pain
 To fast be good for you ;
 It does not follow hence 'tis plain
 That I must famish too."

The dame then sped her on her way,
 And jogg'd for many a mile ;
 And Peter he at home did stay,
 To mind the pot the while.

But in his chair of ample size
 While seated, I suppose,
 This trusty watch did shut his eyes,
 And straight began to doze.

At last the water, heated hot,
 Lifted the cauldron's cover ;
 And then (as cooks affirm) the pot
 Did boil with fury over.

Water and fire with angry strife,
 A hissing dire did make ;
 Which Peter hearing, dream'd his wife
 Was broiling him a steak.

But as the hissing still kept on,
 He dream'd she'll surely spoil it ;
 Then gruffly growl'd, " the meat is done,
 " How long d'ye mean to broil it ? "

Then in his dream his sleepy poll
 With anger great did nod he ;
 When lo ! the tumult of his soul
 Awoke his peaceful body.

Then loudly to his wife he call'd,
 " Come hither dame, I pray ! "
 But vainly to the dame he bawl'd,
 For she was far away.

At last he reach'd his walking-stick,
 To shove the boiling pot ;
 When o'er his legs it tumbled quick !
 And water scalding hot !

Up went his feet into the air ;
 Down went his body great ;
 Crack went the ancient elbow chair !
 And eke poor Peter's pate !

No longer now he felt the gout,
 But, roaring out amain,
 Briskly he turn'd his legs about,
 And stood upright again.

With scalded feet and broken head,
He danced along the floor;
He had not done the like 'tis said
For twenty years or more.

Then round the room the woful wight
Did cast a mournful eye;
Thought he, " I'm in a dismal plight,
That none can well deny."

There prostrate lay the broken chair,
The boiler on the ground ;
The cat, she thought her fate severe,
To be both scald and drown'd.

But now his wife's return from town
Full sore began to dread he ;
Thought he, " she'd surely crack my crown,
Were it not crack'd already."

But long he waited all forlorn,
With pining discontent ;
And still his wife did not return,
Although the day was spent.

At last the street-door lock within
The key began to rattle ;
Thought Peter, " now will soon begin
A most tremendous battle."

Then, with the doctor close behind,
 Enter'd the wife of Peter ;
 But how was she surprised to find
 Her husband come to meet her.

Said she, " how's this, that thou *alone*
 Canst walk along the path? "
 " Said he, " I've been, since thou wast gone,
 In a *hot water bath*."

Now Peter he began to quake,
 As Judith enter'd in;
 Who, when she saw the mess, did make
 A most surprizing din.

" Woman, I've broke my head," said he,
 " And *scalt* my legs to boot;
 So sure there is no need for thee
 To add affliction to 't."

" But," said the doctor, " tell me, sir,
 How 'tis you walk about ;
 Your wife affirm'd you could not stir,
 By reason of the gout."

Then Peter he related quite,
 What we have told before ;
 Then did the doctor laugh outright,
 With loud and lengthen'd roar.

“ But, sir,” said he, “ now, I suppose
That all this time you’ve fasted ;
Pray tell me if your stomach’s woes
The same till now have lasted.”

“ Why, sir,” said Peter, “ I must own,
That since from food I’ve rested ;
The load is from my stomach gone,
And seems to be digested.”

“ Then,” said the doctor, “ I advise
When plagued with gouty pain ;
Since that’s remov’d by exercise,
To scald your legs again.”

“ And as you’d find your health increased,
Were you but somewhat thinner ;
I charge you twice a week at least
To go without your dinner.”

Thus I, at last, have sung my song,
With no small care and trouble ;
So, as the fable has been long,
The moral shall be double.

And first, when, through excess of food,
You find your stomach ill ;
Then abstinence will do more good
Than bolus, draught, or pill.

Again, when pains in limbs come on,
 So you can scarce endure it;
 Then jump about—'tis ten to one
 But exercise will cure it.



FABLE V.

EDWIN.

'Twas through a lone forest, one winterly night,
 Young Edwin was urging his steed;
 No hamlet or cottage appear'd to his sight,
 Nor a taper afar with its radiance bright,
 Nor a star pierced the gloom with its silvery light,
 To show him which way to proceed.

“Alas!” thought the youth, “is this forest my grave,
 How far do these mazes extend?
 Should the bleak, howling tempest continue to rave,
 Unless I discover some cottage or cave,
 Unable much longer its fury to brave,
 My life with this journey must end.”

Just then a fierce gust blew the branches aside,
 Which reveal'd a glad sight to our youth;
 For a far distant light he that moment espied;

“ O ! shine, gentle flame, through these dangers to
 guide,
 Nor let thy faint beam to my path be denied,
 For I need thine assistance in truth.”

So cheer'd by the light, he redoubled his pace,
 While the flame glided slowly along ;
 But alas ! for young Edwin !—deceived by its rays,
 He follow'd the phantom, till lost in a maze,
 And far having wander'd in untrodden ways,
 He plung'd deep morasses among.

Then dismounting his steed with despair in his breast,
 He resolved not to struggle again ;
 When a faint gleam of moon-light, which beam'd from
 the west,
 Display'd to our hero, fatigued and distress,
 The path of which he had so long been in quest,
 But had sought mid the forest in vain.

But scarce had he ventured three steps on the road,
 When his blood was half frozen with fear ;
 For before him a tall slender figure there stood,
 Which, holding its arms out as wide as it could,
 Made young Edwin believe from the form that it
 shew'd,
 That the ghost of some person was near.



Edwin.



The Ass & the Fox.



Now backward with horror he started and fled,
 And wander'd till morning arose ;
 Then he found 'twas a *hand-post* had fill'd him with
 dread,
 That a *will-with-a-whisp* had his footsteps misled,
 And that *he* was like *others*, of whom it is said,
 That they know not their *friends* from their *foes*.



FABLE VI.

THE ASS AND THE FOX.

As an honest old donkey was browsing one day
 On the stalk of a thistle that grew by the way ;
 A fox, just return'd from a dinner on goose,
 Fat, saucy, and full, let his insolence loose.

“ So,” said he, “ sorry beast ! is *that* all you can
 find,
 For your poor toothless jaws at this season to grind ?
 Are all the *birch-brooms* eaten out of the land ?
 Is an old *bushel-basket* no longer at hand ?

“ Yet a thistle, I grant ye, your nature befits,
 I dare say you find that it sharpens your wits ;
 But stay—sharpen your wits ? that can never be done,
 For all the world knows that a donkey has none,”

But the ass, quite contented, it seems, with his diet,
 Resolved on that head to be perfectly quiet ;
 Nor *much* cared as to brains that he did under-rate
 him ;
 Yet he made this reply, and I give it *verbatim*.

“ You suppose I’m a fool, neighbour fox, it is plain,
 Think it still, if you please, that can give me no pain ;
 For it seems over you *this* advantage I have,
 While you *think* I’m a blockhead, I *know* you’re a
 knave.



FABLE VII.

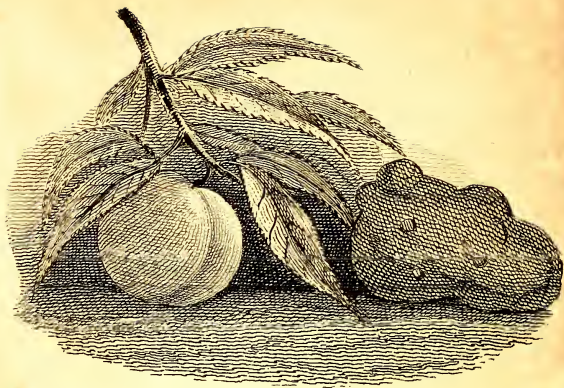
THE PEACH AND THE POTATOE.

O! WHAT will you say to a peach and potatoe,
 Discoursing on beauty of person ?
 Yet their talk I’m afraid is not worse than some ladies,
 Though not quite so soon made a verse on.

Said the peach, “ your complexion will not bear inspection,

Your aspect is vulgar and homely ;
 But my skin is much fairer, my qualities rarer,
 My person engaging and comely.”





The Peach & the Potatoe.



The Show of Wild Beasts.

Said the root, "they judge rightly who think me unsightly,

For I own that I'm not an *Adonis*;

Yet it is not my duty to envy a beauty,

Whose *heart* quite as hard as a *stone* is."

FABLE VIII.

THE SHOW OF WILD BEASTS.

Two apes exhibited for show,

Some time by *Mr. Polito*;

Thinking their master did not need 'em,

Determined to obtain their freedom;

So waiting till the coast was clear,

One day, when nobody was near,

They issued forth, and hand in hand,

Walk'd for an airing down the Strand;

Nor were they presently espied,

Among so many apes beside;

But unmolested pass'd along

Amid the numerous monkey throng;

Both making sundry observations,

On those they thought were their relations.

At last they form'd the bold design,

Some *human* monkies to confine,

And show them off (so says the fable)
 As English apes, if they were able.
 And so it seems, by hook or crook,
 Six curious animals they took,
 And putting instantly to sea,
 They soon arrived in *Barbary*
 Among their friends, and let them know
 They'd got some foreign beasts to show.
 These friends so throng'd the exhibition,
 That many could not gain admission.
 Our apes with joy the concourse view'd,
 And made for all what room they could ;
 And then, as is the usual plan,
 They took their wands, and thus began.

“ Good friends and neighbours all:—you see,
 After long absence here are we :
 We have at last our freedom gain'd,
 Though fourteen years we've been detain'd,
 By apes of an inferior sort
 Exhibited, to make them sport ;
 Of whom we've now kidnapped a few,
 To make in turn some sport for you.

“ First you behold the English glutton,
 He feeds on beef, pork, veal, and mutton ;
 But, Oh ! such dinners he devours :—
 His mouth holds twice as much as our's,

At once he in his stomach puts
 The worth of half a sack of nuts ;
 But, what is singular indeed,
 He never knows how long to feed ;
 But when no longer hungry will,
 While food remains, keep eating still ;
 He'll prove the truth of what I've said,
 If you'll but stay, and see him fed.

“ Here,” said the showman, “ you behold
 An odd young monkey, nine years old ;
 At least, as near as I can guess
 From size and strength, he can't be less,
 Altho' were you his ways to see,
 You'd say he was not turn'd of three ;
 I think, his name they told me once,
 'Tis, if I don't mistake, *a dunce*.
 Now, from this creature it appears,
 Boys' wits increase not with their years ;
 A striking difference indeed !
 'Twixt them and us, but let's proceed.

“ The English sloth you there may see ;
 As usual, sound asleep is he ;
 You'll scarce believe me when I say
 He sleeps all night, and half the day !
 'Tis ten or twelve before he'll rise,
 And hardly then can ope' his eyes ;

I fear that now we shall not wake him,
 Unless one goes inside to shake him ;
 But while asleep, you best behold
 All that about him can be told.

“ This creature here in sickness pines ;
 We do not understand his signs,
 What 'tis he wants we cannot tell,
 We never could when he was well ;
 He says he's hungry ; but, the fact is,
 To say that is his constant practice ;
 A form of speech he uses then
Peculiar to the race of men ;
 I can't explain it, no, not I,
 But think 'tis what *they* call *a lie*.

“ This is an English ape full grown,
 The first for your amusement shown ;
 I fear you will not understand me,
 When I pronounce his name, *a dandy* :
 Vast numbers of this race of apes
 I've seen in town of various shapes ;
 Their brains are few, as you may guess,
 For, all their thoughts they spend on dress ;
 O ! stop, not *all*, how fast I'm talking ;
 For, tired of riding, tired of walking,
 And wishing much for something new,
 They thought they would combine the two,

And tried to speed them on the road,
 While they that odd machine bestrode;
 You see this thing we've brought away;
 —Come! show the company, I say.

“ This animal, with doubled fist,
 Is what they call a *pugilist*;
 A most uncommon creature, Sirs!
 Has changed his *generic characters*,
 A beast Linnæus never saw;
 No cutting teeth in either jaw,
 Tho' nature gave him some, no doubt;
 But now you see they all are out.
 His eyes once grey, as I suppose,
 You now perceive are black as sloes;
 His nose once straight, you see is broken:
 His features cruelty betoken:
 He is, I think, to say the least,
 A frightful and disgusting beast.

“ Thus, neighbours, we have shown you all
 The beasts we've taken, great and small;
 Full twenty more were on their way,
 Whom we could not compel to stay:
 Indeed, we got such blows and kicks,
 The wonder is we muster'd six;
 But few indeed, we freely own,
 Out of the hundreds we have known;
 But yet enough, we feel persuaded,
 To show that men are *apes*, degraded.

FABLE IX.

THE SHOWER OF PUDDINGS.

SAID a youth, to the clouds as he turn'd up his eyes,
 "How I wish soup and pudding were rain'd from the
 skies !

O ! how charming 'twould be ready cook'd if 'twould
 fall,

That so one might dine with no trouble at all."

And so it fell out, says the fable, at last
 That the sky with some odd looking clouds was o'ercast,
 And the south wind blew up a most savory smell,
 When direct from the heavens the aliment fell !

Now the pea-soup and pudding descended amain,
 Till it pour'd from the mountains and deluged the plain ;
 'The pigs were astonish'd ; yet did not forget,
 Like our youth, while they wonder'd, that now they
 might eat.

"However," thought he, "I will benefit by it ;"
 So he took up a piece of plum-pudding to try it ;
 But, alas ! he would not even swallow a bit,
 For he found it was cover'd with gravel and grit.



The Shower of Puddings.



The Dog & the Pitcher.



Who'd have thought it, when pudding was rain'd from
the skies,
That it yet would be needful some plan to devise,
And *some* trouble to take to accomplish his wish;
For *now*, ere he dined, *he must hold up his dish.*

But this dish was not fill'd quite so soon as he thought,
So that both his arms ach'd ere enough he had caught;
But something soon happen'd, more dismal by half,
At which you'll have too much good nature to laugh;

For a large piece of pudding, of more than a pound,
Knock'd the dish from the hands of our youth to the
ground;

"Well," said he, "I have play'd long enough at this
game,

Let it rain what it will, it comes all to the same;
Good things, how abundant soever they be,
One can never obtain without trouble I see."

FABLE X.

THE DOG AND THE FITCHER.

(*A true Story.*)

A HUNGRY dog, (as 'tis supposed,) Whose form was spare and thin,
Perceived a dairy door unclosed,
And straightway enter'd in.

Then round-about he turn'd his eyes
On butter, milk, and cheese,
Thought he, " I fear 'twill not be wise
To take too much of these.

" The milk, in pans so broad and wide,
If lapp'd, will clearly show it ;
But this deep pitcher may be tried,
And they can scarcely know it."

With this he thrust his nose within,
And though the neck was small,
By pushing hard, the prize to win,
He got in ears and all.

" O ! now there's room enough," thought he,
For here the size is double ;
And here is milk enough, I see,
To pay me for my trouble.

The dog he lapp'd till all was gone,
Then raised his head to go ;
But found the jug hung firmly on,
To his dismay and woe.

Vainly he tugg'd, and backwards ran ;
The pitcher ran as fast ;
When almost choked, the dog began
To be enraged, at last.

With desperate blows did he assail
Each door-post as he fled ;
He that oft' briskly wagg'd his tail,
Now briskly wagg'd his head.

But soon the dairy-maid drew near,
Who, with loud exclamations,
Laid a good broomstick on, 'tis clear,
To aid his operations.

At last, he broke the bottom out
Of this disastrous jug ;
But still the dog was not without
The remnant of the mug.

With this, the trophy of the day,
In haste forth trotted he ;
And, if 'twas *ever* knock'd away,
They have not told it me.

So thieves, tho' cunning they may be,
Oft' find themselves detected
(As was the dog we plainly see)
In ways they least expected.

FABLE XI.

THE GOLD PIN AND THE NAIL.

ONE day as a lady was dressing in haste,
 By a jerk of her hand a gold pin was displaced,
 Which falling unseen and unheard to the floor,
 Quickly enter'd a crevice, to issue no more.

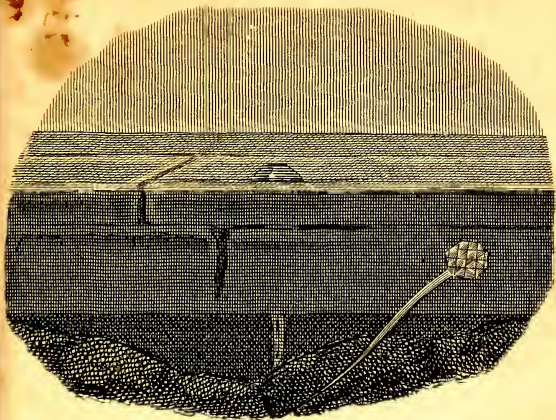
“ Alas ! what a sudden reverse ! ” thought the pin,
 “ But a moment before what request I was in ;
 O ! how many attentions I used to engage,
 But unnoticed I here may remain for an age.”

“ Unnoticed ! ” said one who had heard the remark ;
 “ Why, I’ve been fix’d here ninety years in the dark,
 Unseen and forgotten, and yet, I can say,
 That I never once wish’d they would shorten my stay.

“ And, pray,” said the pin, “ who are *you* by my side ? ”

“ A tenpenny nail, Sir,” the other replied ;
 “ O, indeed ! ” said the pin, “ well, for persons like *you*,
 I think, such a residence really may do.”

“ Very true,” said the nail, “ and I ne’er was ambitious
 Of spheres more extended, or views more propitious ;



The Gold Pin & the Nail.



The Wasps & the Flies.



I'm content this old board still to hold to the rafter,
For ninety years more, and a century after."

"Dear! what a contemptible taste," said the pin,
"Oh! if in my place for one day you had been,
This deplorable dungeon, I'm certain would be
As disgusting and horrid to you, as to me.
For while in this dusty old crack you have tarried,
To Paris, and Brighton, and Bath, I've been carried,
There used in assemblies of fashion to mix,
With muslins, instead of oak-boards to transfix."

"But, my friend," said the nail, "it appears beyond
doubt,
That your owner *can* manage your presence without ;
But if I should my trust for one moment betray,
Then the board, that she stands on, must quickly give
way,
And if so, I would ask those who foolishly rail,
Which does the most service, the *pin* or the *nail*."

FABLE XII.

THE WASPS AND THE FLIES.

A SOUTHERN wall exposed to view
Fine apricots of golden hue,
Watch'd daily by the owner's care,
And well he knew the number there.
The wall with broken glass he strew'd,
If thieves should come, to let their blood.
But thieves there were, who still would pass,
In spite of spikes and broken glass;
For wasps and flies, a num'rous throng,
Consumed the produce all day long.
In vain by hand, he sought to kill
These thieves, too many for him still;
Till vex'd and angry at the pelf,
And wishing for the fruit himself,
A plan, at last, he did invent,
For bringing them to punishment.
"I'll give you all your fill," said he:
Then took of half-pint bottles, three,
And pour'd in each, with friendly haste,
Some sugar'd beer, to suit their taste.
Scarce were the sweeten'd lures suspended,
Ere swarms of thirsty wasps attended,
And flies arrived from far and near,
To dip each his proboscis here;

At first content, as it should seem,
 To sip the juice about the brim ;
 Till tempted further by the smell,
 Deluded hundreds hourly fell.
 In vain the flies ply'd hard their wings :
 In vain the angry wasps their stings :
 Vainly they row'd the bottle round,
 No solid footing could be found ;
 The treach'rous phial's slipp'ry side
 With unavailing toil they tried,
 Till wasps and flies half filled the glass,
 And form'd almost a solid mass,
 On which some stood, at last, to try,
 Their legs and wings to rectify.

But, see now, what a difference lies
 'Twixt angry wasps and patient flies.
 The wasps with many a bold essay,
 With fury try to force a way ;
 With hasty steps one inch attain,
 Then falling back are drench'd again ;
 Till faint, exhausted, and distrest,
 At last, they perish with the rest.

Meanwhile the flies, tho' quite aware,
 How great their present dangers are ;
 Convinced that hurry does belate us,
 Stay to adjust their apparatus,
 Then try their wings a time or two,
 And, if they think that they will do,

Crawl on a dead wasp's friendly back :
 Consider ere each step they take;
 With prudent care and steady creep,
 Gently ascend the dang'rous steep,
 Contented slowly to proceed,
 And so, at last, get out indeed !

FABLE XIII.

ÆSOP'S TRIAL.

BUT the beasts and the birds, and the flocks and the
 herds,

And the frogs, and the toads, and the mice ;
 And the trees and the fishes, the pots, and the dishes,
 Ants, earwigs, snails, spiders, and flies ;

These perceiving, at last, what a scandal was cast
 Upon them, by what Æsop recited,
 All muster'd their strength, and determined, at length,
 For a *libel* to have him indicted.

So the court was convened, and each witness subpoena'd ;
 The judge, and the jury attendant ;
 And there all alone, mounted up on a stone,
 Stood poor Æsop, the hapless defendant.

Said the judge, " We'll proceed, this production to
read,

That the jury may well understand ;
And then leave it to them to acquit or condemn,
As strict justice they think may demand."

So when this he had said, a few pages he read,
Nor had finish'd the volume or near it ;
When the plaintiffs and jury all rose in a fury,
And vow'd they'd not tarry to hear it !

But, who can disclose such a scene as arose,
The barking, the groans, and the hisses !
For, said they, one and all, both the great and the
small,
" Who's to bear such a scandal as this is ? "

Said the fox, " It's absurd ! I ne'er spoke such a word ; "
Said the frogs, " We ne'er held such a tenet ; "
Said the ass, " Could I try on the skin of a lion ?
What a fool he must be who could pen it ! "

Said the wolf, " It must follow, with bones in my
swallow,
I ne'er could have made that oration ; "
Said the crane, " Without doubt, if the bone I'd
pull'd out,
You'd have made me a due compensation."

“ Indeed,” said the bear, “ it’s too bad, I declare,
 To assert that I crush’d his *proboscis* ;
 I have something to do of more consequence too,
 Than to brush away flies from their noses !”

Said the jury, “ So clear does the libel appear,
 Further evidence cannot be needed ;”
 Then the judge turn’d his head towards Æsop, and said,
 “ Your defence may directly be pleaded.”

Then said he, “ I assure ye, my lord and the jury,
 The whole is a false accusation ;
 ’Tis a libel on *me*, which I hope all will see
 Who compose this august convocation.”

“ For know, one and all, both the great and the small,
 Of these faults *you* were never suspected ;
 They are not in the least meant to censure *the beast*,
 But the whole at *our* race is directed.”

“ Now, if in my book with more care you will look,
 You must see what I mean, I’m persuaded ;
 Seeing all the way through, I have labour’d to shew,
 How far below you we’re degraded.”

“ Just hear, I would pray, what those animals say,
 We call *donkeys*,—I hope no offence ;
 When they’re talking together concerning the weather,
 Of instinct, wit, reason, and sense.

hen the fable in question, at Æsop's suggestion,
 Was read, (for they could not deny it ;)
 Then the beasts of all classes, especially asses,
 Felt perfectly satisfied by it.

aid the judge, " What you state, I confess, has some
 weight ;
 Your defence may, I think, be admitted ;"
 aid the jury, " If so, the defendant may go,"
 So old Æsop forthwith was acquitted.

o ourselves, it's confess'd, are these fables address'd ;
 'Tis a fact not to meet with denial ;
 and that this may be known, by all readers, I own,
 Is the reason I've publish'd the trial.

THE END.









